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REPORT OF SECRETARY OF  
TREASURY



15 Treasury Dept.

REPORT  
OF  
THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,  
COMMUNICATING,

*In answer to a resolution of the Senate, the report of Dr. George B. Loring and Dr. T. O. Edwards, who were appointed to collect facts and information in relation to marine hospitals and the marine hospital fund.*

JANUARY 20, 1851.

Referred to the Committee on Commerce.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
January 17, 1851.

SIR: I have the honor, in compliance with a resolution of the Senate, dated the 6th instant, to transmit herewith the original report of Dr. T. O. Edwards and Dr. George B. Loring, who were appointed "to collect facts and information in relation to marine hospitals and the marine hospital fund," under the provisions of the act of 3d March, 1849.

No communication of the views of the department upon the subject of the administration of the public hospitals and of the marine hospital fund, as contemplated by the act, appears to have been made to Congress by my predecessor; and, as my attention has not been drawn to the subject until very recently, I am not at present prepared to express any opinion upon the views and recommendations presented in the report of the commissioners.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
THOMAS CORWIN,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

Hon. WM. R. KING,  
*President of the Senate.*

REPORT UPON THE SUBJECT OF MARINE HOSPITALS.

WASHINGTON, October 1, 1849.

SIR: The undersigned having received instructions from the Treasury Department, in obedience to an act of Congress, passed March 3d, 1849, authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury "to collect facts and information in relation to marine hospitals and the marine hospital fund, and to report to Congress what alterations and improvements are necessary and practi-

cable in the administration of the same," have the honor, respectfully, to report:

In discharging the duty devolving upon them, they have endeavored, by personal inspection of those hospitals already in operation and of those in process of construction, to inform themselves with regard to the accommodation which is already, or will soon be, made for sick and disabled seamen. They have visited many districts, whose commercial interests render attention to the wants of seamen in this respect peculiarly necessary. And they have availed themselves of whatever statistics are afforded by the department and by congressional documents, on the subject. They have also received the advice of many persons whose interests are largely involved with the commerce of the country, and of many societies whose object is the welfare of seamen. The fact that the whole system of marine hospitals has been hitherto almost without form, and void, has rendered all satisfactory accuracy of investigation extremely difficult, and in many cases utterly impossible.

*Acts of Congress relating to them.*

The first step taken for their establishment is the act of July 16, 1798, authorizing the collector of each district of the United States to deduct, on account of every vessel in his district, twenty cents per month from the wages of all men employed, and to render the master or owner responsible for accurate returns of the number of men in his employ. And all vessels engaged in foreign and coasting trade were included under this provision, under a penalty of \$100 in case of false returns, either of the number of men or of the time of their employment, on the part of the master or owner. The fund thus accumulated was placed under the direction of the President of the United States, with power to appoint directors who should control its expenditure, and provide for the accommodation of sick and disabled seamen in the several ports. He was also authorized to invest all surplus money accruing from the tax, or from donations, in stocks of the United States, and to receive in the name of the United States any land or buildings which private munificence might bestow. And he was also empowered to erect suitable buildings in all places where they were deemed necessary.

It is evident, from the character of this act, that the accumulation of a large fund was anticipated, and that the most liberal and ample provision was intended for that class of men who were thus taken immediately under the care of the government. And in order to render the fund available at all times, it was provided "that the moneys collected in any one district shall be expended within the same."

In the act of March 2d, 1799, authority is granted to expend "any moneys" which shall have been collected within the State wherein the same shall have been collected, or within the State next adjoining thereto, excepting what may be collected in the States of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

But by the act of May 3d, 1802, the matter seems to have been brought into its present shape, and all the money "at present unexpended, together with the moneys hereafter to be collected," were made to "constitute a general fund," to be employed by the President for the benefit and convenience of sick and disabled seamen. At the same time, the necessities

26445  
of seamen who entered the port of New Orleans, then out of the jurisdiction of the United States, were provided for, and "convenient accommodations, medical assistance, necessary attendance and supplies," were to be obtained for them, at an expense not exceeding three thousand dollars per annum. And the master of "every boat, raft, or flat, belonging to any citizen of the United States, going down the Mississippi, with intention to proceed to New Orleans," was ordered, on his arrival at Fort Adams, to render an account of the number of men in his employ, and the time of their service, as in case of vessels of foreign entry and coasters, paying the same tax of twenty cents per month, to the collector or naval officer at Fort Adams, and securing thereby the same hospital privileges, under a penalty of \$50 in case of false return.

The directors of hospitals are authorized by this act to receive the seamen of foreign vessels into their institutions, on the payment to the collector of 75 cents per diem, by the master of any vessel enjoying this privilege, for each seaman so relieved. And the money received in each district, in any way whatever, was ordered to be paid into the Treasury of the United States, subject to the same commission at that time received by collectors on all money collected by them. On all money expended in his district, this act allows the collector a commission of 1 percent.

The act of March 3, 1837, follows next in succession, and by it \$70,000 are appropriated for the erection of a marine hospital at New Orleans, \$15,000 for three sites upon the Mississippi, and one on Lake Erie; in the selection and purchase of which the President is authorized to call to his aid one or more medical men of the army, not exceeding three in all; and \$10,000 for the erection of a hospital at Mobile. And from the first day of April following, the laws whereby seamen are required to deduct 20 cents per month from their wages for a hospital fund were suspended by this act for one year, and the sum of \$150,000 was appropriated for their benefit.

The act of August 29, 1842, provides \$10,000 for the erection of a hospital at Ocracoke, North Carolina, under the superintendence and direction of the Secretary of the Treasury.

The act of February, 1843, provides that the sum appropriated by the last act for a hospital at Ocracoke shall not revert to the surplus fund at the expiration of two years from and after the 31st of December, 1844, anything in the act of March 3, 1795, to the contrary notwithstanding.

The act of March 1, 1843, extends the provisions and penalties of the act of July 16, 1798, to the masters, owners, and seamen of registered vessels employed in carrying and coasting trade; and authorizes the issue of such instructions from the Secretary of the Treasury to collectors of the various ports as will secure the collection of the hospital money.

From some cause, not apparent, the provisions of section 2 of the act of July 16, 1798, including coasting vessels under the general law, had been suspended, by construction, since the year 1831, and were merely renewed by the foregoing act.

The act of May 20, 1839, appropriates \$25,000 to indemnify the City Council of Charleston, South Carolina, for damages sustained from being obliged to provide a building for sick and disabled seamen in that port, "in consequence of the failure of the Treasury Department to furnish the amount of \$15,000 for the erection of a marine hospital, according to the



terms of a contract entered into in the year 1801 between the Secretary of the Treasury and the City Council.

The act of August 29, 1842, appropriates the following sums for sites for marine hospitals, selected according to the act of March 3, 1837 :

For site of hospital at Natchez	-	-	-	\$7,000
" " " Napoleon	-	-	-	1,000
" " " St. Louis	-	-	-	7,468
" " " Paducah	-	-	-	1,000
" " " Louisville	-	-	-	6,000
" " " Cleveland	-	-	-	12,000

The act of March 3, 1845, appropriates \$25,000 for the erection of hospitals upon the sites owned by the United States at Pittsburg, Louisville, and Cleveland, under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury.

Based upon the foregoing acts of Congress, hospitals have been erected at New Orleans, Louisiana; Mobile, Alabama; Key West, Florida; Ocracoke, North Carolina; Norfolk, Virginia; and Chelsea, Massachusetts. And there are now authorized to be built, and in process of construction, buildings in Chicago, Illinois; Cleveland, Ohio; Pittsburg, Pennsylvania; Louisville, Kentucky; Paducah, Kentucky; and Natchez, Mississippi. A selection of a site has been made at St. Louis, without effect.

The hospitals now in operation, according to such information as can be obtained from the clerk of marine hospitals at the Treasury Department, and from printed documents, cost as follows—there being some discrepancies between the two sources from which the knowledge has been obtained :

The hospital at New Orleans cost, including site	-	-	\$110,081
" " Mobile " " "	-	-	40,000
" " Key West " " "	-	-	25,000
" " Charleston " " "	-	-	28,000
" " Ocracoke " - -	-	-	about 8,500
" " Chelsea " - -	-	-	27,603
" " Norfolk " - -	-	-	9,334

The cost of the hospital at Norfolk could not be obtained at the department; and that of the building and site at Charleston, South Carolina, is stated to be \$17,663 in Senate document No. 7, twenty-third Congress, second session.

It is estimated that those authorized to be built at Chicago, Pittsburg, Louisville, Paducah, St. Louis, and Natchez, will cost \$30,000 each, and that at Cleveland \$25,000. These are all for which appropriations have been made, except that at Napoleon, which has been suspended because of objection to the site.

Special arrangements are made with local institutions at New Haven, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and St. Louis, under which seamen are provided for at \$3 per week. At Pittsburg, Cincinnati, and Louisville, arrangements are made on a different basis. And with regard to smaller ports, the destination of the voyage decides the amount and kind of accommodation which sick and disabled seamen meet with.

The condition, internal arrangement, and expense of those hospitals already in existence, vary with their number and location. There has been an evident attempt to adapt the institution to the demands of its locality, and consequently neither in form nor in character has any uni-

formity in their arrangement been observed ; custom has decided in many places the *modus operandi*, and those lines which might have been drawn by definite regulations have been left to fix themselves and to become landmarks, sacred by tradition, not immovable by law. It will be impossible, therefore, to give in general detail any sketch of a system which could be understood as being applicable to the hospitals collectively ; but both in the mode of construction, and in all after management, each district presents its own individual picture.

Early in the history of the hospital fund, when by the act of May 3, 1802, it had been made general, the President of the United States seems to have delegated the Secretary of the Treasury as controller of all the business relating to it, inasmuch as all money collected became incorporated by that act with the account of receipts at the Treasury Department. The office of director, which the act of July 16, 1798, created, has been thrown upon the collectors of the various districts, who have become at length directors *ex officio*; and the immediate officers of the different hospitals have received their authority from these two sources. Premising this succinct statement of the immediate and remote control to which these institutions have become subjected, a summary of their history and condition, as far as it can be obtained, seems proper.

### *Chelsea.*

The first appropriation for building a hospital was made by the act of May 3, 1802, when fifteen thousand dollars were authorized to be expended for the erection of one in the "district of Massachusetts." This building was located in Charlestown, costing \$14,842 34, and was purchased in 1824 by the Navy Department for the sum of \$12,875; the land on which it stood being included in the limits of the navy-yard at that place. At that time ten acres of land were purchased in Chelsea, near Boston, and a suitable building was erected there for the sum, as has been stated, of \$27,603 39. This building is now in use. Of the salubrity and beauty of its location too much cannot be said. But its size, which was adapted to the early period of our commerce in which it was built, its decaying condition, and the total absence of all those improvements which by ventilation and means of personal cleanliness have become numbered with therapeutic agents, and incorporated in every system of hygiene, renders it necessary that early measures should be taken for the erection of a new building. The comfort and health of the inmates render such a demand imperative. The number of patients increases annually almost at the rate of twenty-five per cent.; and those wards which twenty years ago were ample in their accommodations for the necessities of the times, now become crowded to overflowing, and the adjoining corridors are necessarily converted into close, unhealthy sleeping-rooms for the sick.

It cannot be a work of supererogation to state here that representations have been made to the commission with regard to the disposal of the site now occupied by the marine hospital in Chelsea. It is said to be so situated as to incommode the inhabitants of the town in their necessary passage from one section to another; a view of the case which is very evident on inspection. The large tract of land owned by government in the same township for the purposes of a naval hospital combines with the marine hospital grounds to remove from all practical benefit to a thriving

place a portion of territory extremely large. A reduction of the marine hospital limits has been proposed as a remedy to this evil, and as a source of income for the benefit of a new building which is needed. An arrangement with the Navy Department whereby a portion of its large possessions in Chelsea might be disposed of for the location of a marine hospital, has been urged by those who would remove the seamen from their present unpleasant proximity to the town, and would provide for them even a more quiet and retired retreat than they now enjoy. On the other hand, an entire removal of the institution from the town has been advocated by those who conceive the presence within their limits of one institution for the benefit of the sick to be sufficient.

The necessity for a new marine hospital at Chelsea exists beyond a doubt. The sale of the present location, either in whole or in part, would go far towards the erection of a new and suitable building. The choice of location is a matter for future action.

The amount of money collected from the hospital tax in the district of Boston and Charlestown during the year ending December 31, 1848, was \$12,574 32, and the amount expended was \$13,685 90, estimating from the quarterly returns on file at the department. The number of seamen relieved was 1,146, and average number of days to each patient was about 25 days. It can hardly be supposed that so large a number of patients could be sustained for such a length of time at less expense than that indicated by the above data, and yet it will be seen that the amount expended exceeded the amount received.

The officers of the institution are a surgeon, whose compensation is \$1,000 per annum, with his house rent; a steward, who receives \$500 per annum; a matron, receiving \$100 per annum; six nurses and attendants, with wages of about \$60 per month; two laborers on the grounds, with the same wages; and two cooks and one laundress, who receive about \$2 per week. This number of employes could hardly be diminished, although in the opinion of the commission the duties and responsibilities might be changed, with credit to the institution and benefit to the inmates.

Reference is here made to a communication made to the commission by a committee of the Boston Marine Society concerning the hospital at Chelsea, marked A in the appendix.

#### *Norfolk.*

The hospital next in order upon the coast is that at Norfolk, Virginia. It was erected not many years ago, and cost \$9,334 66. The building in its location and structure is most convenient and durable, being situated upon a point of land accessible from the harbor by vessels of all sizes. The internal condition and arrangement for the comfort and welfare of the patients are in the highest degree commendable. At no point in our lengthy journey have we found the same attention to the comfort of sick and disabled seamen as at this port. The surgeon, aided by the benevolence of the citizens, has made this institution in its exterior adornments the "snug harbor" for sailors. A sea-wall now protects the grounds, where beauty, order, neatness, and indeed elegance almost unsurpassed by any institution of the kind in the country, abound. These embellishments have cost the hospital fund nothing. The interior is neat and



well arranged, and it is with great pleasure we mention the attention, philanthropy, and economy of the surgeon, matron, and nurses.

The number of patients during the year ending December 31, 1848, was 153; and the expenses of the hospital amounted to \$2,341 08. The surgeon controls the establishment, employing such aid as he needs in keeping the building and grounds in proper order, and in care of the sick. The surgeon's salary has amounted to \$840 per annum; the matron receives \$8 per month and two rations per diem of 20 cents each, her fuel and rooms; and two men-servants receive each \$10 per month and one ration per diem. The cook receives \$40 per annum and her clothing.

The demand for this hospital seems not to have increased in any great degree for several years. In 1804 the amount expended was \$19,286 31; the amount received, \$2,295 94. In 1816 the amount expended was \$13,440 49; the amount received, \$1,074. All other years during its establishment have varied from two to seven thousand dollars in its expenses. The commerce of this port is mostly carried on by vessels owned elsewhere, and the number of sailors returned as liable for hospital money is small. In the foreign and coastwise clearances for the quarter ending March 31, 1849, the whole number of men was 634, of whom only 382 paid hospital money.

It is to be regretted that, considering the neatness and good order and truly medical character of this institution, under the care of its accomplished surgeon, it should not be a more common resort for the sick and disabled seamen of a long range of the coast of that immediate neighborhood. (See appendix B.)

#### *Ocracoke.*

The hospital at Ocracoke was erected in obedience to the act of August 29, 1842. Its cost, as near as can be ascertained, was \$8,500. The amount expended per annum has never exceeded about \$2,600, and the amount received has never reached \$200. It appears not to have been the magnitude of its commercial marine which rendered a hospital at this place necessary; but the exposure of seamen to hardship and disease on the coast, and the detention of fleets in the inlet, whose crews required medical attendance, were the causes which led to its erection. The number of patients admitted during the year ending December 31, 1848, was 73; the amount expended, \$2,000 85; the amount received, \$58 98.

This hospital is situated upon a point almost inaccessible from the main land. It is surrounded by a few dwellings, and, except from transient vessels and those detained by stress of weather, has no visitors. Commerce lures no sail to its shores, and its wilderness of pines and sterile sands invites no adventurer after health, pleasure, or riches. This is the only marine hospital in North Carolina. The city of Wilmington is the commercial emporium; its commerce is three-fourths of the entire amount of the State. The necessity of accommodations there for sick and disabled seamen has often been pressed on the consideration of government, and has been in a measure supplied by private subscription. The sick have been heretofore kept by the week or day in hotels, boarding-houses, and, in some instances of contagious diseases, in negro huts—to the care of any whose humanity or interests regarded them. This state of affairs induced the citizens to form an association, which resulted in the pur-

chase of a dwelling-house on the banks of the river, about two miles from the city, which was fitted up and was kept as a hospital for several years by private contributions. Your commission was informed that the original cost of the building, and one hundred acres attached, was nearly four thousand dollars. It is now unoccupied, and its location for health, beauty, and accessibility, is all that could be desired. The holders of this property are anxious to dispose of it to government, and would sell it at the original cost. Its purchase is earnestly recommended, from an assurance that the interests of seamen would be greatly promoted by the removal of the hospital to Wilmington from Ocracoke, or the erection of an additional one at the former place. No point that has been visited calls more justly for the assistance of government than Wilmington, and there is no doubt that \$10,000 would be as profitably and as humanely expended there in this purchase, or in erecting a suitable hospital, as in any city in the Union. (See appendix C.)

*Charleston, South Carolina.*

The hospital at Charleston was erected at an expense of \$28,000, and has been conducted on contract between the governments of the city and the United States. It is held in a sort of copartnership—the city keeping it in repair and governing it, while the United States government is responsible in the event of its destruction by fire or any other casualty. Situated in an enclosure with the city workhouse and Charleston medical college, in a northwestern portion of the city, its location is favorable and its embellishments are tasteful. Under the charge of the professors of the college, it enjoys the benefit of the best medical and surgical skill; and its attentive steward, matron, and nurses, free the mind from all apprehension for the condition and wants of the inmates. A board of trustees appointed by the city govern it, and nothing is wanted to render the condition of its inmates comfortable.

The number of seamen relieved during the year ending June 30, 1848, was 324. The amount of money expended was \$4,529 61, and the amount received was \$978 52. Nearly the same inequality between its receipts and expenditures has always existed. And passing over the almost utter stagnation which occurred during the last war, it will be found that there has been a gradual decline in the amount of money received, while, on the whole, the disbursements have increased. In comparing the returns of the tonnage of this district with the returns of hospital money, there appears to be no analogy on the score of increase or diminution. The tonnage of Charleston is less than that of Norfolk by about 3,000 tons, while the hospital expenses of the latter place are less than those of the former by more than fifty per cent., and the number of men relieved differs in about the same proportion. The following comparative table, prepared from the statistical reports of 1847, will indicate how difficult it is to estimate the necessity for a hospital by the commercial wealth of any port, unless it be combined with activity and certain causes of disease:

	Tonnage.	Men relieved in hospital.	Expenditures.	Receipts.
Norfolk,	26,438.19	153	\$3,090 30	\$1,651 83
Charleston,	23,566.88	324	6,308 04	1,268 41

The local requirements which regulate the demand for hospitals are, of all others, the most important to be considered, when commercial standing has brought a port into particular notice. (See appendix D.)

### *Key West.*

With regard to the efficiency and condition of the marine hospital at Key West, reference is made to appendix E, containing a report of J. K. Mallory, at that time hospital agent. The necessity for this institution on the coast of Florida has by no means increased with its years. The receipts at the port having been always small, commencing in 1823 with \$50 45, and in 1848 only reaching \$571 45, have never met the expenditures, which in 1847 were \$5,970 95. The number of men relieved in 1844 was 218; in 1846, 192; in 1847, 155; in 1848, 113. In the report for the year ending June 30, 1847, the expenses of each patient are estimated at three dollars per week; but upon examining the statement made by Mr. Mallory, contained in the appendix, it will be found that his estimate is as high as \$8 68. Such an extraordinary disagreement the commission cannot account for on any principle involved in the most ordinary system of arranging business accounts, or in the easiest supervision.

The hospital at Key West was originally built at an expense of \$25,000, including the site; and was rebuilt in 1847, costing \$7,227 37, having been destroyed. The late returns, therefore, are hardly a criterion of its necessity, on account of this interference with its availability. Its restoration, and the economy and discipline which govern its management, render it a valuable resort for seamen exposed to the unhealthy climate in which it is situated. (Appendix E.)

### *Mobile.*

The hospital at this place cost \$40,000, and in all its arrangements is capable of answering the wants of the port for many years. Its distance from the business portion of the city is nearly a mile, an objection that prevails against many heretofore built in other places. The propriety of proper and convenient locations for these hospitals needs only be mentioned to strike the apprehension of all, and should be enjoined upon all who purchase future sites. The building under consideration is large, commodious, and beautifully located. Your commission had not the pleasure of meeting the surgeon of the institution, and was compelled to rely on the kind attention of the present collector for information as to the regulation and medical management. The surgeon was in ill health, and common fame says he has "farmed" the establishment at a less cost than his salary, a course of proceeding which must meet with most decided disapproval. The commodiousness of the building is admirable, with its large wards and many rooms for necessary accommodations. But your commission regrets to say that here, as well as at other hospitals, the convenience of the surgeon and steward is more consulted than the wants and comforts, and even the safety, of the inmates. Crowded in large numbers in the lower wards, without regard to disease, the beneficence of the government in erecting the building is not realized by the patients. Comments upon the influence of ill-ventilated and overstocked apartments on the health of the occupants are unnecessary.



The knowledge of the effect of these things is not now confined to medical men; and airy sleeping apartments are no longer considered a luxury, but indispensable to life, health and comfort.

The furniture of this hospital is very defective. Purchased after a heavy and unexpected outlay in the construction of the building, it was thought to be all that was then necessary. It ill contrasts, however, with the exterior, and is both insufficient and poorly adapted to the wants of the inmates. The beds are very bad, the bedsteads are old and of bad construction, and the internal arrangements demand a thorough renovation.

The importance of this institution may be inferred from the statistics of a few recent returns made to the department. In 1844 the number of men relieved was 622; the expenses were \$7,398 05, and the receipts \$3,072 96. In 1848 the number of men relieved was 688; the expenses were \$9,282 67, and the receipts \$3 007 96. These two years are sufficient, considering the interval of time between them, to indicate the amount of relief afforded, and the economy which has apparently governed the managers of the institution. It is evident, however, that some steps should be taken to place the hospital under more rigid surveillance than it enjoys at present, and to provide accommodations more suitable for the inmates, and work in accordance with the present amount of knowledge in all matters relating to a healthy hospital organization. (See appendix F.)

In order that a comparison may be made between the four most important hospitals of those already mentioned, the following table, containing an account of the number of patients, the time of relief, and the aggregate expense for a recent year, is inserted here :

	No. of patients.	No. relieved.	Days of relief.	Aggregate expenses.
Boston -	-	884	1, 146	23, 602
Norfolk -	-	130	153	2, 663
Mobile -	-	587	688	9, 425
Key West	-	92	113	1, 934
				\$14, 037 73
				2, 291 52
				9, 282 67
				4, 313 23

#### *New Orleans.*

The marine hospital at New Orleans was opened in November, 1848, and cost, including the site, \$110,081. Its situation, in McDonoughville, is the best the city could afford, being convenient to the river, broad and airy. Your commission was offered every facility for an examination by the present collector of the port, Samuel J. Peters, esq., under whose care and management the hospital is at present. His appointment had preceded the visit of the commission but a few days; and having been so unfortunate as not to find the surgeon in the hospital, we were compelled to rely on information obtained from the steward and subordinate officers. The large expenditure in the building, the superior style of the furniture, and the airy and commodious wards, indicated all that could be done by the government in the building for the comfort of the sick. An assistant surgeon resides in the hospital, under whose care the patients may be said entirely to be placed. The surgeon's absence frequently extends to two or three weeks, and he is seldom present except on an emergency. The crowded condition of the wards, an evil so glaring at Mobile, was here most manifest. The upper and healthy wards were closed and unoccu-



pied, while in the basement were promiscuously mingled patients of all classes and descriptions, regardless of their diseases.

The building is surrounded by a high wall; and the enclosed area, in which grew neither shrub nor flower, was in mournful contrast with the beautiful shrubbery and fruit trees that grow spontaneously and in such rich profusion in that neighborhood. The collector issued immediate orders to supply this much needed embellishment, and to place the grounds in a condition of convenience and beauty corresponding with the building. The necessity of these embellishments needs but to be mentioned to be appreciated. Sick far from home, and its associations and comforts, the sailor needs, as all do, the influence of moral causes as adjuvants to his recovery. "Each shady nook, each leafy glen," flowers of beauty and fragrance, awake his sympathy, excite his curiosity, and recall scenes of home and childhood, and bid him hope in the future. Your commission rely with confidence on the belief that past neglect will be atoned for by the taste and attention of the present collector, and that the institution will be second to none in the country in usefulness.

Your commission would here recommend the fulfilment of the requisitions upon the surgeons of all marine hospitals of daily visitations. The salary at this institution fully requites such an obligation, and should be equally demanding in all; and it must be apparent that no arrangement can be satisfactory or beneficial which allows the superior officer of such an institution to reside beyond its limits, and to take no part in its control. The importance of a resident physician need not be urged further.

The letter of Samuel J. Peters, esq, contained in the appendix, (marked G,) contains the statistical view of the port of New Orleans, upon which the necessity for a hospital may be based. With regard to the receipts and expenditures, the tables furnished by the department present the most extraordinary variety, commencing with a sudden rise in outlay in 1835, of \$20,050 09, over \$9,796 82 of the year preceding, and varying, without special regard to variations in the number of patients, from fourteen to forty thousand dollars annually, from that time to the year 1847. It is difficult, with the facts furnished it, for the commission to explain this use of the fund. It appears that in 1844 the number of patients was 1,031, and the expenditures were \$32,831 40. In 1848 the number of patients was 1,143, and the expenditures were \$27,105 27; being an increase of patients of 112, and a reduction of expenses of \$5,726 13. This is an example of similar inequalities to be found throughout the returns since the year 1835. The number of patients relieved annually has seldom equalled that of New York, and not greatly exceeded that of Boston; but in neither of these ports have the expenses risen near those of New Orleans; and it remains to be seen how much the ample and well-built hospital erected there will reduce and bring to a regulated scale the outlay for the support of disabled seamen.

### *Western Rivers and Lakes.*

Hospitals were first established for the benefit of inland navigation by the act of March 3, 1837. Agreeably to that act, a board of surgeons from the army selected sites at Natchez, Napoleon, St. Louis, Paducah, Louisville, and Cleveland and Pittsburg. The appropriations for each have been stated above. The sites having been selected by a corps of medical

men of the army, the plans for the buildings were furnished by Surgeon General Lawson, and the contracts were arranged by the War Department; Lieut. Col. S. H. Long receiving charge of those at Louisville, Paducah, and Napoleon, Major John Sanders of that at Pittsburg, and Colonel Webb of that at Cleveland. In addition to these, appropriations have been made for a hospital at Chicago. Repeated attempts have been made to secure a site at St. Louis—all hitherto ineffectual. Still another selection has been made by a commission of surgeons, appointed May 10, 1849. Objections having been raised to the site at Napoleon, the work has been suspended.

### *St. Louis.*

The importance of a marine hospital at this thriving western city has long been felt, and the repeated efforts made for its erection have met with an unfortunate succession of obstacles. The report of Surgeons Harney, Heiskell, and Cuyler, a board selected for the purpose of making locations in 1837, states that "St. Louis, as a site for the third and last hospital on the Mississippi, presents such superior and evident claims over every other town on the upper portion of the river, that it is hardly deemed necessary to enumerate them." The land, amounting to 18.67 acres, chosen by them at an expense of \$7,468, was conveyed conditionally, by deposit of a deed in the Bank of Missouri. Difficulties arising on account of the necessity for the consent of the legislature of Missouri to the purchase, and the conditions of the sale not being complied with, the parties retreated from their bargain, and the matter still rests in *statu quo*. Repeated appropriations have been made in vain. No land has as yet been obtained, and the corner-stone of the hospital is not yet laid.

In addition to the appropriation made by act of March 3, 1837, for selecting site, the act of August 3, 1848, contains an appropriation of \$10,000 for erecting a hospital, and the act of March 3, 1849, contains a clause as follows: "For erecting a marine hospital at or near St. Louis, Missouri, in addition to the ten thousand dollars heretofore appropriated, per act of August 3, 1848, for the same object—to be expended only when the government shall have obtained a bona fide title to the site—and for the purchase of said site, the ten thousand dollars heretofore appropriated by the act aforesaid, or so much thereof as necessary, shall be applied—\$20,000."

No part of the appropriations made for the purchase of the site and the erection of the marine hospital at St. Louis has been carried to the surplus fund.

Further action being taken during the present year, the board to whom the matter was submitted, May 10, 1849, reported inability to purchase with the \$10,000 specified, and selected a piece of ground occupied by government for an arsenal; avoiding thus additional expense, and the provision of law which requires the consent of the legislature of Missouri to the transfer of the land and the erection of the building. The matter is still, therefore, unsettled, and is recommended to an early consideration.

The demands of the port are constantly increasing. The amount of money received in 1838 was \$758 60; the amount expended, \$2,509 48. In 1839 the receipts were \$1,256 90; the expenses \$4,031 69. In 1847

the receipts were \$2,271; the expenditures \$2,129 10. In 1848 the number of men relieved was 298, at the St. Louis hospital, at an expense of \$3 per week. The attention bestowed upon sick and disabled seamen at this port by the Sisters of Charity, who have charge of the hospital, is kind and ample. But the standing of the city, its enterprise and its wealth, claim the attention of government on this point, which is connected with the great commerce of the West, and which indicates the liberality and honor of government in the protection of its citizens.

It is for the removal of such obstacles as have interfered with the hospital at St. Louis that your commission would bestow its labors, and earnestly present its recommendations of a well-organized and consistent system of marine hospitals.

### *Paducah.*

The site at this place, selected in 1837, is still unoccupied. Its condition has been brought to the attention of Colonel Long, whose report, dated Louisville, March 30, 1849, has been kindly forwarded by him to the commission. As it contains the topography of the various locations under his supervision, it is a valuable document, to be found at the topographical bureau, War Department.

The appropriations already made for the hospital amount to \$30,000, and it is respectfully submitted whether, with St. Louis on one side and Louisville on the other, anything more than a temporary provision is needed at a port whose commerce is so transitory. As a resort in sickly seasons, it may without doubt be useful; and for the benefit of those navigating the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers, it would be convenient. While its immediate necessity seems questionable to the commission, under the as yet disorganized condition of the whole system, we would refer to the remarks made by the board appointed for the selection of the site.

They say: "In ascending, Paducah is the first point deserving of particular notice after leaving the malaria region. It is forty-four miles distant from the junction of the Ohio with the Mississippi, and upwards of three hundred from Louisville. It is, moreover, for several months in the year at the head of navigation for boats of the largest class, owing to the difficulty, and oftentimes impossibility, of passing the Cumberland bar, near the mouth of Cumberland river. Another most important consideration is its geographical position, being situated at the mouth of the Tennessee river, and thirteen miles below the mouth of the Cumberland, through which the productions of a part of Kentucky and all of Tennessee and north Alabama must pass to find a market, giving employment, consequently, to large numbers of boatmen. For all these reasons, involving the important consideration that a hospital here would benefit a larger number of men than at any other point below Louisville, there could be no hesitation in selecting it as a site of the lower hospital. Any point materially higher up the river would be approaching too near Louisville; besides that, it would be depriving the boatmen of the Tennessee and Cumberland, as well as a part of the Ohio, of all the advantages to be derived from the hospitals on this river. The same objection cannot apply to the site selected; for all the boatmen above must pass by



Paducah, both in going to and returning from New Orleans and other ports on the Mississippi."

*Napoleon and Natchez.*

Included in the list of selections by the board of 1837 are the two above mentioned places, for which, as for St. Louis and Louisville, appropriations to the amount of \$30,000 each have been made. The former of the two locations having been abandoned for the present, the latter alone remains for consideration. It "was the first place above New Orleans which was selected, because of its commercial importance, the numerous boatmen trading to that place, its appropriate distance from New Orleans, (about 300 miles.) and the large number who are annually taken sick at that place." No returns of hospital receipts and expenditures of any regularity are to be obtained, either from this port or from Napoleon and Paducah. It is difficult to judge, therefore, of their requirements. And the attempts of Colonel Long to discover the landmarks, aided by those citizens whose faithful memories retained the deeds of their fathers, have enrolled the whole operation with those mysterious territories whose chartered limits ran "from sea to sea."

It is believed that with a hospital at Natchez, in addition to those at New Orleans and St. Louis, the wants of boatmen upon that great thoroughfare will be fully provided for.

*Louisville.*

This point is considered one of the most important on the river, in respect of hospital necessities; for the two classes of boats, those employed below the falls of the Ohio and those which pass the canal into the waters above, rendezvous at this place. Large numbers of men on this account congregate here, of whom, in 1848, 1,250 paid hospital money, 165 were relieved, and the amount collected was \$1,309 20. The expenses are regulated by a contract made with the city government, by which \$500 are allowed annually for the care of such men as require relief. This contract, which has existed since 1841, subjects both parties to so much injustice that a speedy destruction of it is recommended. The city incurs annually an expense many times greater than the sum allowed, even by resorting to most rigid exactions on the admission of patients. Did not a rapid completion of the hospital promise a removal of this twofold evil, a more earnest representation would be considered necessary.

The difficulty arising from employing large numbers of slaves on board river boats is felt here more decidedly than at almost any other port—slaves being exempt from hospital taxation, and from hospital relief. The letter of N. P. Porter, esq., collector, (appendix H,) is very explicit on this head.

The new hospital which is in process of construction is beautifully located, being convenient and commanding. The foundations having been laid three years, active preparations are being made to complete it this autumn. It will be well built, in accordance with the improvements of the day, under the supervision of Col. Long, and for the sum specified and appropriated.



*Pittsburg.*

Appropriations having been made for a hospital at Pittsburg, by acts of March 3, 1815, August 3, 1818, March 3, 1849, Dr. Lawson's plan was adopted in May, 1845, and Major John Sanders received instructions to contract for the building, according to the request of the Secretary of the Treasury. Major Sanders, having constructed the sewer and a portion of the foundation-walls, was withdrawn to Mexico during the war; and, by permission from the Secretary of the Treasury, transferred the work to J. B. Guthrie, esq., surveyor of customs in Pittsburg. Under the care of Mr. Guthrie the foundation-walls were finished, and the work stopped for the want of appropriations. On the 10th of October, 1848, Mr. Guthrie received instructions that \$10,000 had been appropriated for the furtherance of the building; and also that proposals be advertised for by him for a supply of the materials. This was done. And by means of the appropriation of March 3, 1849, of \$11,667, the hospital may be erected during the coming winter if prosecuted with vigor. The location cost \$10,000; is two and a half miles from the city; and, with deference to the intelligence which governed its selection, no special beauty, convenience, nor salubrity seems to have adapted it to a hospital site. The foundation-walls and sewers were completed at an expense of \$7,485.

The appropriations for this hospital have been as follows :

March 3, 1845	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$5,333
August 3, 1848	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,000
March 3, 1849	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,667

At present an arrangement is made with the Mercy Hospital, a benevolent institution conducted, with great neatness and intelligent care, by the Sisters of Charity, by which boatmen are provided for at \$2 50 per week. Under this order of things the disbursements have never equalled the receipts.

The number of boats enrolled at this port is about 100, carrying an average of about 20 men each, and the number of transient boats is about 100 additional. On the annual renewal of a license, each master makes his return to the surveyor of customs of the number of men he has employed, and the time of paying hospital money, and receives a receipt accordingly. It is found that in almost every instance in this port, as well as in all others on the rivers, this tax is reckoned among the current expenses of the boat, and is defrayed by the owners, without regard to the boatmen.

The question of collecting and levying hospital money, involving others relating to the enrolment and licensing of boats upon the rivers, has been treated with practical intelligence by J. B. Guthrie, esq., at that time surveyor of customs at Pittsburg, whose communication may be found in the appendix (marked I,) and is especially recommended to attention.

Unquestionably the supply will greatly increase the demand for a hospital in this place, as, under existing circumstances, boatmen either remain at Cincinnati in descending the river, or struggle to get there in ascending—preferring the relief afforded there. In obedience to this sentiment, the amount of suffering undergone is, without doubt, very great.

*Lakes—Cleveland and Chicago.*

The increasing navigation of the lakes renders marine provisions for their ports and shores peculiarly important. Their commercial interests already employ 914 vessels, consisting of 95 steamboats, 45 propellers, 5 barques, 93 brigs, 548 schooners, 128 sloops, and involve a capital of more than \$7,808,000.

The wealth accumulating around these great inland seas, which serve as a highway through the rich and fertile extent of country they wash, demands more and more consideration. And, while light-houses warn the mariner of the dangers of these stormy shores, hospitals are already being erected to afford him relief for the diseases which render his hardships doubly severe.

The appropriations made for the hospital at Cleveland are :

March 3, 1845	-	-	-	-	-	\$8,333
August 3, 1848	-	-	-	-	-	10,000
March 3, 1849	-	-	-	-	-	6,667

On examination the foundations were found lying as they had been for many months, on account of deficiency in the appropriations and the absence of the officer under whose control the construction was advancing. The plan adopted is Dr. Lawson's. The appropriation of last Congress has given the work a stimulus, which it is believed will soon result in its completion.

The appropriations for a hospital at Chicago are :

August 3, 1848	-	-	-	-	-	\$10,000
March 3, 1849	-	-	-	-	-	20,000

The selection of a site has been made from land belonging to the United States, used for fortification.

The building has been prosecuted under the direction of the War Department during the past summer.

The plan adopted varies from that presented by Surgeon General Lawson, and is intended by Colonel Abert, its projector, to combine convenience and healthy arrangement with elegance of form. Its location is extremely fine, being on the high land overlooking the lake, and it is to be hoped that its benefits will soon be available.

In a communication politely made by Colonel Abert to the commission, he states that, "from last accounts, all of the excavation had been made, and the foundation walls commenced. It is hardly probable that more will be done this season than to raise the foundation to the first floor, and to lay in a stock of materials for the future progress of the work."

The erection of these two hospitals on the lakes is an addition of extreme value to the number of beneficent institutions which the hospital fund has originated. The navigation of these waters is constantly increasing, and the exposure to which their navigators are subjected is equal to that of the most boisterous seas. In those ports where no hospitals are erected, ample provision should be made for the sick, on a system which your commission will have the honor of presenting hereafter.

At *Detroit* 103 seamen were relieved during the last year. The tonnage of the port was 2,981, and the number of hands employed in the shipping of the State of Michigan was 1,846.

At *Buffalo*, where no hospital exists, the number of seamen relieved was 183. The tonnage of vessels built in the port was 3,892. The tonnage of American vessels entered was 208,984. The number of men employed was 7,009; and the tonnage of foreign vessels entered was 92,535, having 5,875 men employed in their service. The commercial importance of the port is by no means stationary. The exports of foreign and domestic produce amounted to \$197,869, and the imports to \$66,867, during the year ending June 30, 1847. In addition to this, the lake navigation centring here renders the activity and energy of the port remarkable. As a retreat for the multitude of seamen who throng the lakes, it is extremely well located, and is, of necessity, a point to which many of them gather during the inclemency of the winter months.

Both of the ports last mentioned demand special consideration. The hospital at Chicago would seem to provide amply for the western extremity of the lakes—that at Cleveland for the eastern. But the seamen resorting to Detroit and Buffalo, in connexion with the business of those two places, require comfortable quarters within their immediate reach; and these ports are strongly recommended to be included in any system which may hereafter be adopted, all special attention beyond that of boarding houses having been hitherto neglected, as far as the commission have been able to discover.

#### *Cincinnati.*

The state of affairs at Cincinnati seems, to the commission, to demand particular attention. The following table will present the statistical condition of affairs during three recent years, and will indicate the importance of the location.

	Men relieved.	Amount received.	Amount expended.
1845 - - -	271	\$1,002 68	\$981 49
1847 - - -	332	997 93	1,010 00
1848 - - -	282	1,636 09	846 88

These are the data as they appear in the annual reports of the department for those years. No account could be found in the office of the late collector, which would enable the commission to judge of the accuracy of this public statement.

It was found that an agreement had been made by the Secretary of the Treasury, with the trustees of Cincinnati township, controlling the Commercial Hospital in that city, by which all disabled boatmen were to be received into the hospital, in consideration of receiving the aggregate of the hospital money collected in the port. The report of the trustees for the year ending March 5, 1849, shows the number of boatmen admitted to have been 360; and the amount of money received from the collector to have been \$1,254 71. (The average number of mariners constantly in the wards of the hospital is about thirty; and it will not be doubted, when it is stated that the trustees represent the compensation received for the care of these men to be about 25 per cent. on the actual cost.) The uncertainty of the arrangement made here, partakes rather of the nature of a speculation between the two parties, in which hitherto the city has been largely the loser.

The patients who avail themselves of the provision thus made for their



wants were found mingled in the wards with objects of charity, who were not receiving the fruits of an involuntary investment, but were subsisting upon the alms-giving of an opulent community. The hospital was crowded with inmates, and it was evidently difficult to extend its benefits to that class of persons for whom it was erected with the liberality of its intention, while its rooms were occupied by those whose right rested on the fund. It was stated by the trustees that a new wing or additional building would soon be erected, and that even that room would be occupied at once. It is but just to state, in behalf of the city, that no apparent reason exists why any portion of the expenses arising from the establishment of a hospital fund should be drawn from its treasury. In Cincinnati, as in Louisville, the anomalous condition exists, of local institutions lending their aid to support men whose taxation renders them objects of the care of the United States, and who, had they landed in almost any other port on the rivers, would have received such care as the general government has provided for them.

Of the condition of the fund in this place, more will be said hereafter. Of the necessity for some more just and equitable mode of relief for those who pay the fund, much might be said here, were it not believed that a mere representation of the facts will provide the remedy. At no point on the river, as far as the observations of the commission go, is a marine hospital more needed than at Cincinnati. The multitude of boatmen attracted there by its growing commerce, renders such an institution more and more requisite. The locality of the city is rendered very attractive to boatmen on the rivers below, on account of its reputed salubrity and the amplitude of its charities. With this reputation, the benefit which would arise from the establishment of a hospital near the city, to that class of men who of all others need such aid, would be incalculable.

The commercial condition of this great city of the west is worthy of slight notice in connexion with this subject—in fact, commands our attention. During the last year the tonnage built in her limits was 8,094  $\frac{3}{4}$ , and the enrolled and licensed tonnage employed in her trade was 17,801  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 17,367 American and foreign tons having cleared at the port. She has already been estimated as surpassing New York in the amount of her exports, and constitutes a great centre of supply to foreign articles to a rich and populous country. In her prosperity she has established fine institutions of all natures. And if the necessity for a marine hospital exists in any port on account of its commerce and its seamen, the claims of the boatmen who labor in the navigation of this great emporium demand attention.

### *Rock Island.*

The notice of your commission was drawn to this point by resolutions of the legislature of Illinois, presented to Congress and printed February 19, 1849. It is well known that a portion of the island has been already occupied by the United States in fortification, and that the whole tract lies at a point where the navigation of the upper northwestern waters centres. The growth of territories around those waters, renders them of great importance as highways for the tide of business, which must increasingly descend into the cities and country lying below. The use of any portion of this island for the comfort and protection of those engaged in the labors



of those new and unhealthy regions, into which the vigorous commerce of the west is extending itself, would result in an honorable and beneficent provision. Soon the call will be imperative, and the plan which the resolutions propose, and which has been suggested to the commission, is at the same time economical and effectual.

*Important points of receipt and expenditure.*

There are, besides the districts in which hospitals are erected, other important points where great necessity exists for the relief of sick and disabled seamen, and in some of which this necessity is amply provided for. In the ports of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, New Haven, and Savannah, the existing wants are provided for by contract with the local institutions. In some of these ports the arrangement is unlimited, and seamen are supplied with all necessary attention. In others it is not so. And reference is here made to letters received from the collectors of these ports, marked K, L, M, N, O, in the appendix, in which their condition and wants are fully laid down.

*Maine.*

This State presented itself with peculiar force, in the examination which has been made of the local wants of seamen. It came before us with its coast and rivers studded with some of the most enterprising commercial towns in the Union, and its population devoted more than that of any other State to form our commercial marine. It seems unnecessary to collect statistical detail to prove what is everywhere acknowledged; and yet no well endowed hospital is provided for its seamen, nor is even the meagre supply that is made open to all, on account of unavoidable necessities which exist in some of the districts of collection. In Portland and Bath, small private dwellings are appropriated for hospital purposes, with a certain degree of success. But in the districts of Waldoboro, and Bangor, and Penobscot, extending along a large portion of the seaboard, and the whole navigable extent of the Penobscot river, great numbers of seamen have been deprived of hospital privileges, both on account of the impossibility of securing accommodations for them at the prices restricted by the department, and a construction of the law by the officers of the customs, confining the amount expended to the amount collected within the limits of the district. This latter evil the commission met with nowhere else; and besides being unable to discover the existence of such a law, was at a loss to account for its application in the districts of Maine alone, of all the Union.\* In the act of July 16, 1798, this restriction was incorporated; but when the act of May 3, 1802, reduced the receipts through all the States into a general fund, the President was authorized without reservation to provide "for the benefit and convenience of sick and disabled seamen." By enforcing the restriction contained in the former of these two acts, the "benefit and convenience" referred to in the latter becomes a mere matter of chance, and the sailor who has been paying for privileges as broad as the boundaries of the Union, finds that he must choose his

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\*Regulations of April 16, 1821, contained this provision, it is true; but custom has elsewhere entirely destroyed it.

port of entry; he must sail for Boston, not for Bangor, if he would enjoy them. It is hardly necessary to state that the collectors themselves, in observing this law, have been filled with a sense of its injustice, and have so expressed themselves.

The difficulty of obtaining accommodations for the sick on the terms allowed by the department, according to the regulations issued May 15, 1841, has been in many cases insurmountable. In the ports of Bangor, Belfast, Thomaston, and others, it has happened, in cases of contagious diseases, that neither public nor private doors could be opened for them, either by charity or money. The fact that even one man has suffered on this account, on the wharf at Bangor, is sufficient argument against a longer continuance of such a system.

The remedy for these evils lies in the establishment of one or more hospitals within the State; if one, an ample one—if more, smaller and at convenient distances from each other. The commerce of Portland would certainly warrant some provision for the wants of its seamen. The same may be said of Bath, and the same of Bangor, and Thomaston. It would be difficult to select a point convenient for all, and their intermediate ports of entry. Portland and Bath are comparatively well provided for at present, although an improvement is by no means impossible in their condition. In the eastern extremity of the State, however, it seems to be peculiarly necessary that, either by purchase or lease, the department should secure suitable buildings and grounds for hospital purposes, in such a location as future investigation shall decide.

The amount of money collected in the State of Maine during the year ending June 30, 1848, was \$6,264 26, and this sum judiciously applied would go far towards carrying out the plan which has been proposed.

The exposure of seamen in the coasting trade has probably no parallel. In addition to this, in such ports as Bangor, where vast amounts of lumber are to be passed from hand to hand and loaded, the effects of the constant application of cold water are felt most severely. All the acute diseases brought on by such exposure are constantly met with. These two causes, affecting as they do a large body of men, render the demand for a consideration of their necessities extremely imperative. The close connexion of Maine with the shipping interests should not be forgotten. The number of vessels furnished by her during the year ending June 30, 1847, was double that of any other State except New York, and more than twelve thousand tons larger than that State. 73 ships, 120 brigs, 151 schooners, 1 sloop, and 1 steamer, computed at 63,548 $\frac{1}{4}$  tons in all, enriched the commerce of the country from the enterprise of her inhabitants; and almost every port in the world was visited by a delegation from her hardy sons. It is not unreasonable, therefore, that on their return they should hope to find every "benefit and convenience" for the relief of their disease and suffering, as one of the emoluments of their hardships.

The commission would respectfully recommend, therefore, that regulations be issued as soon as convenient, relieving the collectors from the necessity under which they judge themselves to be laboring, with regard to the restriction of the expenditures to the amount collected, and that early provision be made which shall fully meet the wants of those interested.

*Hospital Fund.*

The expectations attached to the act of July 16, 1798, with regard to the amplitude of the fund, have never been realized. For some years after the passage of this, and the following act of May 3, 1802, the receipts far surpassed the expenditures. But as a knowledge of the institutions and the number of seamen resorting to them increased, it was soon found that the expenditures could not be met by the proceeds of the taxation, and annual appropriations by Congress became necessary.

The amount received to the 30th of June, 1848, was \$2,698,764 49, and the amount expended was \$3,465,720 37—making a deficit which amounts to \$766,955 88. Undoubtedly a portion of this deficit, which has been supplied by appropriation, should be included in the outlay for buildings and land, although how much of it should be so reckoned does not appear in any annual return or general report. It will be found, on computation, that the cost of those buildings already erected is \$249,518, and that appropriations to the amount of \$240,000 have been made for the erection of other buildings now in process of construction. The amount devoted to accommodations for hospital purposes is, therefore, \$489,518; and the property secured to the United States, in this way, may be considered in many respects as a valuable portion of its possessions.

*General Remarks.*

From the foregoing details may be gathered, as far as statistics will allow, the growing importance of the system of marine hospitals, to provide for the health and comfort of sick and disabled seamen on our coasts, and rivers, and lakes. The propriety of such provision seems to have impressed itself upon the minds of almost every civilized government, whose maritime interests constitute a large portion of their strength and success. Besides the intimate relation which the sailor bears to the revenue of his country, acting as an operative in the great transactions out of which come the resources of the nation, he is one of the numerous ranks of minute-men whose arms are always ready to defend the national honor. It is on this account, undoubtedly, that seamen have appeared to be immediate recipients of government bounty, and closely connected with the general government system.

Early in the history of our own government the attention of Congress was called to this subject, and the arrangement which was then made was thought to be liberal, and to promise an ample fund for the contemplated object. From that time to this, the system has undergone many modifications. The powers vested in the President have been delegated by him to the Secretary of the Treasury; the collectors of the several districts have become directors; the regulations issued by the department have varied at different times; and the whole plan has been extended from the line of the coast to the navigable waters of the interior.

During the course of this expansion, many questions have arisen of a local and general nature. The former have been noticed in the results given of personal examination, and in many cases the latter have necessarily been brought into the subject under individual consideration. But many important points still remain; among which are: the collection and management of the fund; the provisions made for building the hospitals;



the regulations which have been adopted in controlling them; and the plan which may be entered upon, to reduce and concentrate them into one simple, economical, general system.

It may be well to premise that, in considering the subject, it has been looked on as worthy of becoming incorporated into an individual independent body, whose duties and functions should be distinct and uninfluenced by any other existence. It is found that in some of the circulars issued for regulating the hospitals, they have been spoken of as merely auxiliaries to such municipal aid as the several districts might bestow. That this was not the original object of the foundation, must be apparent from the whole tenor of the acts which gave it birth; and that it cannot exist in this secondary capacity, is evident from the historical facts which have accumulated since the passage of those acts. Neither the sailor who submits to a heavy tax for his own benefit can be satisfied with the privileges granted to paupers, nor can municipal authorities be impressed with the necessity of providing for a class of men who are at least one remove away from objects of charity. The "temporary relief" afforded by the allowance of four months in the wards of a hospital seems to be a just abolition of all claims upon government, and the invalid who has passed through this probation uncured may reasonably be restored to all the rights and privileges of a private citizen. While he is in active business as a sailor, his claims rest upon government; when disease or fortune has put an end to his maritime life, all obligations which grow out of provision for his "temporal relief" as a "sick and disabled seaman" naturally cease. It is for the active sailor that the marine hospital establishment is intended; and for the development of this, these examinations and considerations are made:

I. Among these considerations that of the collection and management of the fund has been placed first, as being of primary importance. It will be seen that the course pursued hitherto has failed of affording means sufficient for the support of those hospitals which are needed. The number of seamen has increased in far greater ratio than the amount of the fund. No definite calculation can be made, from the data given, of the relation which exists, or should exist, between the number of seamen belonging to the United States and the hospital receipts for any given year, as indicated by the returns, so great are the discrepancies and irregularities which exist. Until 1829, total disregard of all obligations to render distinct and separate returns of hospital money was practised by collectors, and a circular issued at that time, (October 1, 1829,) by the Hon. Secretary Ingham, was an attempt to secure proper accounts. The effect of this circular, if we may judge from figures, has been but partially satisfactory. From some inexplicable cause, deficiencies have existed, which have attracted the attention of every investigator of the subject, and led the Hon. Secretary Woodbury to call special attention to the subject. At that time, and ever since, the question has been, why so large a commercial marine should furnish so small and disproportionate a fund. The amount which was paid by more than one hundred and fifty thousand seamen during the year ending June 30, 1848, was only \$94,391 87. Had these men been in active service throughout the year, their taxation would have realized \$360,000; and it will require a great deduction on the ground of want of employment, and the number of fishermen and whalers, to bring the receipts down to the small limits indicated by the report for that year.



The instance thus taken is by no means singular. Were this comparative view taken of other years, on a nice calculation the deficit would be the same. On any ground that can be assumed, it is reasonable to judge that while our commercial interests are prosperous, and our vessels are not rotting at the wharfs, a deduction of four months from the year's labor of each seaman for exemption from hospital-tax would not be too small. And making this deduction, we find that 100,000 seamen will pay \$240,000—nearly 110 per cent. more than was actually collected from all the foreign, coasting, and inland navigation. The data taken here are small, as will be seen hereafter.

The causes of this difficulty differ with different districts. In the communications received from various sections of the Union, and contained in the appendix, the difficulties encountered by the several collectors are laid down. From these, and from knowledge gained by personal interview in other places, it is judged that the greatest trouble exists with coasting vessels, and all other classes of navigation whose business requires no foreign papers. A boat running from New Orleans to Cincinnati may change its hands, either in whole or in part, at almost every port it enters on its voyage. The annual renewal of the license, at which time the hospital dues are collected, is obtained only upon the rendering of an account of the men employed and the length of time of their employment, and the correctness of this account depends entirely on voluntary honesty, or on some collateral information obtained by the collector. So it is with coasters. And these two classes of vessels compose a large part of the tonnage and employ a large number of the seamen of the United States.

The mode of collection hitherto pursued in most of our large cities has been by making out an account against vessels engaged in foreign trade, dating from their clearance, and rated by the number of men designated by the shipping articles, and granting no further clearance until these dues are settled. In coastwise trade the average time of running, say eight months in the year, is taken, and the number of men estimated by the masters of the vessels, often under oath.

All financial estimates are of course hypothecated on the honesty and correctness of the given data. It is not for the commission to call in question the correctness of the returns made from the several districts; while, at the same time, the absence of all vouchers, all check, and other attainable accountability, would authorize the consideration of this point of the subject. And an examination of some of the local accounts certainly gave no great promise to the commission of general accuracy. In fact, the whole matter of pecuniary responsibility is based on the uncertain foundation of sentiment. And it is undoubtedly on this account that local complaints and local charges against the agents of government in this business are heard. It may be that this evil has no remedy. It will be seen that many of the gentlemen who responded to the interrogatories of the commission maintain the opinion that the present mode of collecting is equitable, convenient, and effectual. It may be convenient on account of its freedom from responsibility; but how effectual it is, has already been shown; and with regard to its equity, let any man judge, who can estimate the difference between a tax of 20 cents per month on wages of \$100 and on wages of \$10, the former being rated at one-fifth of one per cent. and the latter at two per cent. upon the income of the different individuals.

This is almost the only direct tax laid by government. The power to lay it has always been granted on account of the highly charitable object had in view. From the income of a proverbially improvident class in the community a specific deduction has been made, in reality in many cases onerous in its nature, and government becomes self-constituted guardian and trustee. Properly levied and accounted for, it would unquestionably serve the object for which it was intended, and the sailor would stand in the dignified and honorable position of one living on the funded earnings of his days of vigorous activity. As the questionable legality of the taxation is laid aside by common consent, it is only asked that, while it is continued, it may be rendered distinct in all its operations. Once received, its expenditure can only be made with propriety and justice by rendering it the endowment of a system of well ordered hospitals, which shall be devoted to the seamen of the United States, and shall protect them against poverty and almshouses in their times of sickness.

Since, then, the fund is so important in its object, the mode of collection may still be considered an open question worthy of consideration. For the sake of increasing the immediate responsibility of masters and owners to government, it is proposed that a tax of from 5 to 10 cents per ton, to be paid annually, or at every arrival from foreign voyages, be levied in behalf of the hospital fund; and that the tax of 20 cents per month upon seamen be continued as a remuneration to the vessels in which they sail, and be paid to the masters or owners. It is very necessary that the claims of seamen upon the hospitals should be continued by some mode of taxation which shall lead them to value the privileges they thus purchase, and to enjoy them with the relish of actual ownership. It is also just that no unrequited tax should be laid on shipping, which, we are always told, is already taxed to its utmost. By the plan proposed, both these requisites are provided for. And it will be found that, taking all classes of vessels from 100 to 1,000 tons, a tax of 8 cents per ton would about equal the present deduction made upon the wages of the hands employed.

A vessel of 100 tons	would pay	\$8 00 per year;	3 men pay	\$7 20
" " 200 "	" " "	16 00 "	6 "	14 40
" " 300 "	" " "	24 00 "	10 "	24 00
" " 400 "	" " "	32 00 "	12 "	28 80
" " 500 "	" " "	40 00 "	12 "	28 80
" " 700 "	" " "	56 00 "	15 "	36 00

By the table it will be seen that, supposing the men to be employed throughout the year, the tax of 8 cents per ton upon tonnage will not vary much from the amount due from the deduction of 20 cents per month—proper regard being had for the strength with which the vessels are manned. Extreme accuracy of detail cannot be expected in such a calculation; but let us remind those who would take exception to it, that the deficiency, slight as it is, falls upon the larger class of vessels, where it cannot be felt. On a 700 ton ship, the demand above what would be paid by her hands were she constantly employed, would be only \$20 per annum.

The tonnage of the United States is now estimated at 3,500,000. The proposed tax would yield \$280,000. The number of seamen is 175,000; and estimating that 50,000 are constantly unemployed, the tax of 20 cents per month on the remainder would yield \$300,000 annually. Considering

the present condition of the fund, which does not reach \$100,000 per annum, it is at least advisable that a proposition in which the results of calculations by men and tonnage vary so little should be subjected to a test.

In the tonnage estimate, whaling and fishing vessels are included, and the necessity which rests upon the crews of the former seems to render this inclusion proper. Hitherto, both classes have been exempt from hospital tax; but their exposure, and their intimate connexion with merchant vessels, would warrant their being classed with their crews, and being subject to the same regulations. Efforts in the case of whalemén have been made, and the report of the Hon. Joseph Grinnell, of the Committee on Commerce, is referred to on this subject. The necessity for a hospital at *New Bedford*, for the benefit of whalemén and others, has often been strongly represented; and were it not believed that in the organization which should be made, such ports as New Bedford and New London would receive ample consideration, the proposition for a hospital in one of these places would be strongly urged. In a letter addressed in reply to the commission, Mr. Grinnell says: "There is great need of a hospital at this port (New Bedford;) sailors, in the winter and spring, when there are great numbers here, suffer very much for want of proper accommodations."

II. The provision made for the erection of hospitals deserves, in its turn, some notice. This has been done by means of appropriations—amounting, as has been shown, to \$489,518; and the application of this sum has been various in its mode and result. Until the act of March 3, 1847, the ground was purchased, and the buildings erected by contracts with the Treasury Department, either immediately or through the collectors of the districts. By that act, however, the purchase of three sites on the Mississippi, three on the Ohio, and one on Lake Erie, was to be made by the aid of "one or more medical men of the army." This enlisted the medical staff of that body, and beyond them the erection of the buildings was passed into the hands of the Topographical Bureau of the War Department. The report of the Surgeon General, dated March 23, 1844, (House Doc. 204, 28th Cong. 1st session,) contains the action of the board of surgeons, with some interesting data, showing that twelve years ago, in 1837, the commerce of the western rivers had become so large as to have impressed upon the minds of educated men devoted to the object the necessity of some good arrangement for "sick and disabled seamen." The locations selected by that board are still unoccupied, the buildings being not yet finished.

The plan for the buildings selected by the Surgeon General is peculiarly applicable to the purposes for which they are intended, in all climates not liable to severely cold, piercing winds. And, with the exception of the absence of all means of ventilation other than that afforded by the windows, doors, and chimneys, the style and arrangement of the buildings are neat, commodious, and convenient. It cannot be expected that for all sections of this country, with its variety of climates and diseases, the same plan should be applicable; and it can only be a matter of surprise that, with all the demands before him, the Surgeon General should have selected a plan adapted to such a variety of locations.

The hospital at Chicago is a variation from this plan, and emanates from the Topographical Bureau, Col. J. J. Abert, chief. In respect of



wards and provision for currents of air in warm weather, the plan is very admirable. It has, however, no other means of ventilation, and, as it now stands, would preclude all access of fresh air during the winter months. The quarters for the surgeon are by no means sufficiently distinct from the main building, when it is considered that the medical officers of these establishments are civilians, and exercise the duties of private practice. The offices of the building are too publicly arranged for neatness and privacy, the bathing-rooms and water closets being stationed on each side of the main staircase leading to the wards and the surgeon's quarters. Such sentinels are hardly appropriate to guard the entrance to any public or private building, and certainly should never recommend the plan to any one who would consider the comfort of officers or patients.

It is hardly to be expected that any style of building should be universally applicable. On this account, the commission would suggest the propriety of instructing the collectors of the districts, with the aid of such intelligence as the various localities afford in the way of architects, physicians, and others, to select plans and contract for land and buildings, subject in all cases to the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury. In no other way can the local wants be satisfactorily provided for.

With regard to the buildings already in process of construction, your commission cannot refrain from expressing regret that more regard has not been had for the modern improvements, in water, ventilation, &c. The power of pure air and cleanliness in assisting the physician in his labors of healing cannot be overrated. The benefit to be derived from the labors of Bell, and Wyman, and Espy, and Emerson, can be appreciated in no habitable dwelling more than in these institutions, whose roofs cover crowds of diseased bodies. The most formidable pestilence of hospitals arises from a want of sufficient circulation of air through the wards; and every hospital surgeon whose occupied beds stand in close succession, can judge to a great degree of the success of his operations by the quality of the air by which his patients are surrounded. The great father of progressive English surgery removed his patients from the crowded streets of London into the open country, when he dreaded the result of severe capital operations. Since his day, the introduction of lungs and arteries, in the shape of ventilators and water-pipes, into the bodies of buildings, has given them vitality, which every intelligent physician hails as an omen of health, and every careful surgeon *claims* as his right and his guaranty of success.

The progress which has been made in the buildings has been unusually slow and tedious. No hospital whose location was provided for by the act of March 3, 1837, with the exception of that at New Orleans, is yet finished; and that at St. Louis is neither, as yet, located nor contracted for. The officers having them in charge have been drawn to active duty in the army during the late war, or the appropriations have been slow and inadequate, through the want of energetic and definite instructions. The growing necessity for these buildings demands in a tenfold degree their completion beyond the requirements of their commencement. It must be apparent that a system in which all marine associations are interested, to which those engaged in providing for seamen look forward, and from which seamen themselves expect protection and comfort, should be so arranged that its buildings may be adequate to its necessities, and its agents may always be obedient to its wants.



III. The regulations which have at various times been issued for the control of marine hospitals have reference chiefly to the admission and residence of patients, the use of the fund, and the internal economy of the institutions. Early in their foundation, directions prescribing the powers of collectors were circulated, and from time to time these directions have been obeyed or disregarded, according to the demands of the season.

A circular dated April 19, 1809, issued by Mr. Gallatin, authorizes the collectors to fix all rules for the government of hospitals, and presents the extraordinary feature of a removal as much as possible of all powers from the attendant physician. On April 16, 1821, Mr. Crawford directed that no incurable diseases should be admitted into the hospitals, that no seaman should remain longer than four months, and that the expenditures in each district should not exceed the amount collected within the district. Other circulars have been issued, regulating the expenditures according to the amplitude of the fund from year to year. On May 15, 1841, orders were issued from the department by the honorable Secretary Ewing, to the effect that foreign seamen who had not served in American vessels three years should not be admitted into the hospitals, and that in all cases relief should be confined to seamen in destitute circumstances. This circular, which is more elaborate than any issued either before or since, prescribes rates of payment for the maintenance of seamen in ports where no hospital exists, viz: \$2 50 per week for boarding, lodging, and nursing, in all ports north of Newbern; and \$3 per week in all ports south of that city. The rates by which medical services are to be paid are also adjusted by the same circular, viz: 20 cents per diem for a time less than twenty-five days, and \$5 for every patient when the number does not exceed ten; \$2 50 for every patient above that number. In ports south of the Potomac, 25 per cent. in addition to the above rates will be allowed for professional services. For these rates the collectors were ordered to secure the best aid and quarters in their power, and to depend on public institutions when private accommodations cannot be obtained. Vigilance in confining the permits for admission to all men legally authorized—strictly engaged in maritime pursuits—is also urged. The character of the fund and system is laid down as an auxiliary to local municipal institutions, and its nature is estimated on the basis of such a valuation. No further regulations were issued until those of November, 1848, drawn up by the honorable Secretary Walker, prescribing rules for the internal government of the hospitals, assuming upon himself the power which Mr. Gallatin had delegated to the collectors, and judiciously endeavoring to bring all to a certain degree of uniformity.

Time seems to have rendered some of these regulations obsolete, and circumstances, beyond the control of the department, have rendered others entirely void in many of the districts. The rates fixed for the maintenance and medical attendance of those who needed them, have been found to be too small, and ineffectual in securing any care whatever in many urgent cases. The condition of affairs in Bangor, and other ports in Maine, has been referred to, and the remarks there made are universally applicable. It is not easy for a seaman to understand why, after paying his hospital dues, he should become a pauper; and local authorities are not ready to look on him as such, and render him corresponding assistance. The low rate fixed for his board and nursing drives him to almshouses; and the man becomes degraded, because his occupation has de-

prived him of a home, and his little investment has given him no retreat. A total and radical removal of this idea of linking marine hospitals with almshouses, and sailors with paupers, cannot be too speedily effected, and is a work to which your commission would devote itself. The fund, properly collected, will afford ample means, it is believed, for the support of retreats for every active sailor during a limited period of sickness; and it should be expressly understood that, let the man go where he will in the Union, in an American vessel, as an American seaman he will find support provided for him in his disability—support temporary, but sufficient to restore him to active service.

It has been found, thus far, that while this amalgamation exists, the benefit to be derived from the fund is reduced in amount, and an effectual arrangement for its expenditure cannot be made. While it is supposed that appropriations will always be necessary for the supply of deficiencies in the system, it is believed that they may be devoted to a worthy purpose only when the hospitals are elevated out of their present condition.

With regard to the rates fixed for medical services, perhaps no scheme of economy in expenditure has been so much abused, whenever an opportunity offered itself. In the annual reports made by the department, this evil is not so apparent as in those general returns in which the aggregate expense is stated. These annual reports are of comparatively recent origin, and an examination of the general report, including the estimates from 1802 to 1836, dated December 8, 1834, before which no annual report was made, will indicate, by the irregularity of the expenditures, the kind of management to which the fund has been subjected. Well authenticated statements in the several districts also convince the commission of the truth of their conclusion.

The time fixed for the patient to remain in the hospital seems to be adequate to all diseases which come under the design of the fund. The relief is intended to be temporary, and cannot in the nature of things be extended to those cases which are past cure, or destroy the usefulness of the sailor at sea. There are cases, however, which demand special attention: men who return from sea disabled on account of exposure to unhealthy climates, and after a short time find their funds exhausted, are recommended to a generous construction of the law, even if the prospect of a return to sea-life is gone. Those men, also, who, from an unwillingness to lie idle, occupy themselves in fishing for a short time, intending to return to the merchant service, are so situated as hardly to come under that construction of the law which deprives fishermen of the benefit of the hospital. An old man, too, who has spent his life in the service; whose youth gave him no permanent attachments, whose manhood had no providence, and whose hoary head has no home, calls reasonably upon the humanity which moved the adoption of the hospital system by government. It may be that during the existence of a whole generation he has been paying hospital-money, without enjoying the benefit. The fund he has thus accumulated is not large, it is true, but it may serve to pass him easily down from his labor on shipboard, through the honorable gradation of a hospital patient, to the sadly dependent condition of the pauper. Sailors are proverbially short-lived. They rarely live beyond fifty, and grow old at forty; and while thousands are cut off in their prime by disease or accident, those who come to the hospital borne down by the weight of years can be counted by tens. To those who

linger on the way, they who have hastened off have left a legacy, which is found in the hospital, whose benefits they never enjoyed. The regard which government has seen fit to show for this wandering class of citizens can hardly be stinted and limited by rigorous law, and if guided by judicious economy, may be exceedingly broad in its blessings. The cases which arise laying claims upon discretion are constant and numerous. An American citizen, for instance, sails from Eastport to Boston as a common sailor, is a few hours on the voyage, has become enrolled in the list of seamen, and having paid a mere trifle of hospital money if any at all, he is taken sick, and is entitled to four months in a hospital. A foreigner has sailed in American vessels not quite three years, paying his contribution to the fund, lending his arm to American strength, and toiling in the service which gives us weight abroad and wealth at home, and he is tossed by some winter gale upon our frozen shore, destitute, and enfeebled by hardship: he has no right by law to the benefit of the hospital fund, and the collectors are instructed to observe the regulation by which he is cut off, with rigor and exactness. There must be some discretion in cases like these. Of all the men who pay this fund and who aid in increasing our commercial strength, there must be a small number who lay just claims to an easy and charitable rendering of the law. And all such as these are recommended to the mercy of government.

It has occurred several times that orders have been passed by the department, reducing the expenditures of hospitals a large percentage for the current year, on account of a failure on the part of Congress to appropriate a sufficient sum for the usual outlay. A necessity of this sort is attended with an inconvenience, which borders closely on injustice. It is analogous to that order of things which has been spoken of before, and which renders the entrance of a seaman into a hospital a matter of chance, instead of right. When the privilege is to be obtained by demanding it at a lucky hour, the respect for it is all destroyed, and the dependence upon it becomes a shadow. Should no method succeed in raising the fund up to the requirements power should rest somewhere to meet the liabilities incurred in the management of the system.

The question involves the life and health of a useful class of men, and demands that no delay should be created in securing such aid as their condition demands. It is hardly reasonable that the neglect of an appropriation should force men into short commons, and homœopathic doses of medicine.

IV. The object of all our inquiries is to discover what course can be adopted to reduce and concentrate marine hospitals into one simple, economical, general system. The greatest defect which exists at present is, that no method of government and internal regulation has been entered upon, which would render them parts of a uniform whole. The position of the hospital at Mobile is as distinct and different from that at Norfolk or New Orleans, as if one were a hotel, and the other a hospital. In one district the physician and surgeon resides within the limits of the hospital grounds; in another he pursues his private business in the circuit of his city, and an assistant represents him for months in the wards of his hospital. Here, the surgeon selects his own steward—there, the collector of the district makes the appointment himself. In this port, all seamen are relieved without reference to the amount collected within the port; in



that, not one man in ten receives any benefit whatever. Irregularities exist in the collection of the fund, and positive ignorance is found in too many districts, as to the manner or propriety of disbursements.

It will very readily be seen that all attempts to ingraft the system of marine hospitals upon the army or navy would be wholly inconsistent with their design. The propriety of increasing the corps of surgeons in either of these departments, to an extent capable of taking charge of the hospitals now in existence and hereafter to be erected, together with smaller establishments needed in more limited places, seems to be incompatible with economy and with that attention to his peculiar province which especially becomes an officer of government. Without further comment on this proposition, which is referred to rather because it has been made than because it requires refutation, and which has been ably met in a pamphlet attributed to J. McGinnis, esq., who has had the hospitals under his supervision for a long time, your commission would respectfully suggest that the following plan be pursued in carrying out that remodelling which seems to them necessary.

In order that suitable professional information may control the system, and give it such a position as it deserves, it is proposed to place it under the charge of a chief surgeon, who shall have his bureau attached to the Treasury Department. The regulations which are to govern the hospitals should emanate from him. The surgeons employed in the several hospitals should be responsible to him for the proper management of the institutions. The demands of the districts should be so well understood, that the care provided for seamen shall be intelligent, and in proportion to extent of the locality in which they happen to have fallen. The knowledge to be obtained at the bureau should be correct, and detailed in all matters relating to the diseases, patients, expenses, management, &c., of the hospitals under his control. And he should regulate the number and position of persons employed in these hospitals, in a way most conducive to the development of fine medical institutions, devoted to the physical wants of a large class of men.

Placed on this footing, there is no system of hospitals that would be more respectable and useful. Laying aside, for a moment, the benefit which might thus arise to the recipients of the bounty, the amount of valuable statistics which might be gathered for the medical profession is almost unbounded. A well-organized line of hospitals extending along our coast and rivers, receiving the diseases of all climates, of all influences, and of all varieties of constitution, and sending in their stores of experience to an intelligent chief surgeon, could not fail of benefiting mankind, and in forming an honorable and important profession. That course which would bring the marine hospitals up to the standard which they should maintain, and would carry their results into the pages of science, would at the same time render them doubly useful in the work of relief for which they were founded. It is education which elevates all men to that charity which never faileth, even when the knowledge itself shall have vanished away.

For the better control of the hospitals, in their several locations, it is proposed that the chief surgeon may select two or more physicians in each district in which a hospital is situated, who with the collector shall compose a committee of direction, who shall see that the regulations issued from the bureau are fully carried out. It being neither desirable nor



possible to remove the control of the collections and disbursements, nor the permits for admission from the hands of the collectors, it seems proper that there should be in each district a board of medical men, who may aid the surgeon in such matters as may require assistance; constituting, thus, a board of consulting surgeons. The condition in which the commission found some of the hospitals, prompts them to make this suggestion.

It is, of course, expected that such a board would not add to the expenses of the system. And it is here suggested that in future no fees for collection and disbursement of the fund be allowed to collectors; but that the management of the fund and the institutions be a portion of the duty of collectors, *ex officio*.

In those districts whose limits are so small as not to need a hospital, it is deemed proper that the collectors be authorized to make arrangements in every port with such boarding-houses as will insure to the seamen good attention and comfortable quarters in case of sickness. One of the greatest evils in all commercial towns is a want of good boarding-houses for seamen; and it is believed, that by affording the patronage of government to such as will make themselves competent to receive it, there may be in almost every district in the Union a comfortable dwelling always ready in case it is needed, and affording a pleasant home for those who resort to it. Such houses would undoubtedly be well supported, and would of course add nothing to the expense of the system beyond what would be paid them for such patients as they might receive. And, in order that these places of resort may afford proper accommodations for the sick, liberal remuneration is proposed. The rates for medical attendance could not vary much from those already established.

It is believed that a management based upon this outline would result in an accurate and economical system at once. By restoring to the Treasury Department the supervision of purchase of the land and of construction, aided by the proposed bureau, the energy and benefit of the institutions would be greatly increased. Their identity would be at once established, and, looking to a well-appointed head, the character they might take would be honorable and influential. It should be remembered that the class of men whose physical interests have been referred to your commission is scattered throughout the whole Union. Every seaport, every lake harbor, every river-landing, has its due proportion of these members of society, who influence its morals, and govern, to a certain extent, the forces which gather round congregations of men in all places. Whatever influences are provided for them affect not them alone, but the circles in which they move. Let them feel that in every district the tax they have paid has provided for them a respectable resort, and their physical necessities will be relieved, while their position will receive an elevation from the value of this extended institution, which is theirs alone. As auxiliaries to the energetic and unwearying benevolent societies which are endeavoring, in all our large cities, to ameliorate the sailor's condition at home and abroad, the suggestion of good boarding-houses, under a sort of supervision involving government in no expense, is urged again. In rich and populous towns these things are unnecessary, on account of the generous provision made for respectable seamen's quarters by well-endowed societies. But in our smaller ports, where the only retreat is a cellar, or hotel on underground principles, the sailor is reduced, on landing, to the level of vagabonds and paupers. The offer of neat and re-

spectable dwellings, the supply of wholesome food, and the removal, as far as possible, of the irritations of want, are great moral as well as physical agents for good ; for it is true now, as it was centuries ago—

———"intus, et in jecor ægro,  
Domini nascuntur."

The importance and magnitude of the hospital system, bounded by the spreading limits of our Union alone, involving interests east and west, north and south, lay claims to immediate consideration. In the last annual report of the Boston Port Society, the deficiency in the present order of things is referred to, and the fact that the attention of government has been drawn towards it is noticed, with the "trust that it may be met by some adequate measure of relief" And your commission can only regret that, in securing this relief, their investigations and suggestions appear to them, of necessity, so remedial in their nature, after the system has attained its present respectable age.

We have the honor to be, respectfully, your obedient servants,

TOM. O. EDWARDS,

GEO. B. LORING.

*Commission for examining Marine Hospitals.*

HON. WM. M. MEREDITH,

*Secretary of the Treasury, Washington.*

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#### APPENDIX.

- A. Report of committee of trustees of Boston Marine Society.
- B. Letter from collector of Norfolk.
- C. Letter from collector of Wilmington.
- D. Letter from collector of Charleston, S. C.
- E. Letter from collector of Key West.
- F. Letter from collector of Mobile.
- G. Letter from collector of New Orleans.
- H. Letter from collector of Louisville.
- I. Letter from collector of Pittsburg.
- K. Letter from collector of New York.
- L. Letter from collector of Philadelphia.
- M. Letter from collector of Baltimore.
- N. Letter from collector of New Haven.
- O. Letter from collector of Savannah.
- P. Letter from J. McGinnis, esq., on cost of hospitals.
- Q. Letter from Surgeon General, on land at St. Louis.
- R. Letter from Colonel J. J. Abert, on hospital at Chicago.

## A.

Boston, *September 26, 1849.*

The committee of the trustees of the Boston Marine Society, to whom was referred a communication from Dr. Geo. B. Loring on the subject of seamen's hospitals, &c., report:

That the importance of the subject requires more time than your committee have been able to devote to it, especially as immediate attention and action were required. Two of their number have visited the hospital at Chelsea, and are well satisfied of the utter inadequacy of the accommodations to the wants of sick and disabled seamen who are so unfortunate as to be compelled to go there. Since the building was erected the commerce of this port has been constantly increasing, and now many sailors who have long contributed to the funds, and who have a right to its benefits, are unable, from the crowded state of the hospital, to get admittance at all times, or are deterred from making application by the well known state of things there. There are at this time 131 patients; and for the want of room elsewhere, beds have been placed on both sides of the main passage-way, which of itself is but about ten feet wide.

Your committee are unwilling, with their limited knowledge of the facts, to say a word about the management of the hospital; indeed, they are not sure that it is not as well conducted as it is possible with its present very limited means and appliances.

Humanity demands, and seamen have a right to a proper resort in case of illness. There should be a large, airy, commodious hospital, with the modern improvements for ventilation, cleanliness, and comfort. The present building at Chelsea is destitute of all these; and your committee hope that the proper authorities may at once be made aware of the necessity of a reform tending so directly to the health, comfort, and encouragement of so large, valuable, and, they must add, much neglected class of men.

ISRAEL WHITNEY,  
ELIAS E. DAVISON,  
JOHN DOAK,

*Committee.*

## B.

CUSTOM-HOUSE, NORFOLK, *June 6, 1849.*

SIR: I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 4th instant, propounding certain inquiries in relation to the marine hospital fund in this district, and I have to reply thereto as follows:

1. The number of seamen who were attached to vessels that cleared from the port in the quarter ending the 31st day of last March, for foreign countries, was 229. The number of seamen attached for the same period to vessels in the coasting trade was 405.

2. The number of seamen who paid hospital money in the same quarter was 382.

3. The number admitted into the hospital was 39.

4. The average period in hospital has been from thirty to forty days.

5. Seamen are admitted by permit from the collector, when, on an examination by the surgeon, they are found to require medical aid.

Ex.—3

6. The probable cost of food alone for each patient has been about \$1 20 per week.

7. The amount of hospital money collected annually has been from \$1,000 to \$1,200.

8. The fees for collection and disbursement, allowed at and to this office, are  $1\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. on the former, and 1 per cent. on the latter.

9. The moneys collected for the hospital fund are expended on the support of the patients, medicines, salaries, and occasional repairs, and deficiencies paid out of customs collections.

10. The hospital money is paid by the masters of vessels, who are supposed to have retained it from the wages of their crews.

11. The tonnage of this port on the 31st day of March last was as follows :

Registered vessels -	-	-	5,439 $\frac{8}{5}$
Enrolled and licensed vessels	-	-	11,208 $\frac{4}{5}$
Enrolled as steamers	-	-	1,229 $\frac{7}{5}$
Licensed (under 20 tons)	-	-	1,107 $\frac{7}{5}$
Making a total of	-	-	18,985 $\frac{1}{5}$

It is proper to remark that the first answer has been made to refer to the number of seamen attached to vessels sailing and trading from this port, and not to such only as belong to vessels which take their papers from this office, as most of the trade of this district is carried on by vessels owned elsewhere.

12. I regard the exemption of apprentices and slaves serving on board of vessels, (and viewed as American seamen by our consuls abroad,) from the charge for the support of the fund, as inequitable. As the benefit is a personal one, it should be a payment *per capita*. Perhaps, however, if paid by the owner or master without reference to the previous collection from the sailor, the burden would be more equal, especially as craftsmen on canals are by law exempt, whose wages should not be higher than those of others more exposed.

Under the invitation in the last sentence of your letter, to make any suggestion which I might deem useful to the hospital establishment, I will venture to call your attention, as I have already done in conversation, to the great injustice done the seafaring community, by the entire separation of the naval and marine hospital funds. Instances have often occurred here, where men have been during their lifetime paying hospital money to the one or the other fund, and yet have been denied the benefit of either. The rule in the navy, and perhaps a necessary one, is to regard a seaman paid off by the purser of a vessel as from that moment unconnected with that service. In the civil marine he must be attached to some merchant vessel. So that, when taken sick in the short period of relaxation after his discharge, the period when he is most exposed to disease and to accident, the seaman is without relief; he is neither in the navy nor in the civil service; and, having no attachment, even the poor-house is legally closed against him. This is a great injustice, and should be removed.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

CONWAY WHITTLE, *Collector*.

HON. MR. EDWARDS,

*Commission on Marine Hospitals.*



## C.

CUSTOM HOUSE, WILMINGTON, N. C.,  
June 4, 1849.

SIR: In answer to your favor of the 29th ult., propounding certain questions in relation to marine hospitals, I have the honor of returning the following answers:

1st. There are about forty-four men attached to vessels enrolled at this port.

2d. Of these, thirty pay hospital fees.

3d. None of this number have applied for relief in vain.

4th. Those who apply for relief remain on the sick-list three or four weeks, laboring under chronic diseases.

5th. No seaman is admitted unless he has his protection.

6th. Cost for board and lodging is \$2 40 per week for each man.

7th. Amount of hospital fees collected for one year from 1st of April, 1848, to 1st of April, 1849, was \$487 34.

8th. Commission charged, one per cent.

9th. The amount collected is placed to the credit of the United States.

10th. There is no hospital in this place; consequently the sick seaman is placed in a sailor tavern or negro-house.

11th. Hospital fees are paid by the captains, twenty cents per head, deducted from their (seamen's) wages.

12th. Amount of enrolled vessels belonging to this port, 2,800 tons.

If the present mode of collecting the hospital fund could be altered, and in lieu of 20 cents per head, a duty of 12 cents per ton exacted on every vessel, by adopting this, more would be realized than by the present system. As it now stands, the officers pay no more than the seamen; a general fund could be raised and properly distributed. This is the best seaport in North Carolina; from 600 to 700 vessels arrive annually here. The majority of them are engaged in the coasting trade, under enrolment, belonging to northern ports, and pay no hospital fees here. The foreign trade has dwindled to nothing since the trade ceased with the West Indies. I think the number of sick seamen who have been treated here for the last year is nearly 150, most of them belonging to coasting vessels. It appears hard that the unfortunate, to whom the country owes so much, are not so well provided for as the slave at the south. When the sailor falls sick he has to be placed in a tavern or negro-house, where he cannot obtain that attention and those comforts which are so justly due to him. If a hospital is necessary in North Carolina, it ought to be located at this place; it is called for by every feeling of humanity and justice. I herewith transmit a statement in relation to Mount Tirza. As you visited the site, it is unnecessary for me to make any further explanation.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. C. BETTENCOURT, *Collector*.

Hon. T. O. EDWARDS,

*Commissioner, &c., Washington, D. C.*

## D.

## COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,

*Charleston, September 1, 1849.*

SIR: I received to day your letter of the 26th August, and give below the answers you ask for to your questions:

1st. The hospital in Charleston was erected in 1832.

2d. It was placed under the management of the City Council, by a contract giving the Council the sole management, on condition that they receive any number of seamen sent by the collector, furnish "good and sufficient meals, necessary subsistence, medicine, medical attendance and advice, nursing, proper necessaries, and all other aid required for sick and disabled seamen, at the rate of 60 cents per diem." The government to rebuild in case of loss of building by any extraordinary cause, as fire, &c., but not to do ordinary repairs.

3d. The number of patients relieved averages about 245 per year.

4th. None are admitted but seamen paying hospital money, on account of the United States.

5th. The amount received is about \$900; in 1848 it was \$870.

Dr. Edwards, who examined the hospitals along this part of the coast, told me it was admirably managed in all respects; the only thing he pointed out as defective, was the absence of a bath for the general use of the inmates.

With great respect, your obedient servant,

WM. J. GRAYSON,

*Collector.*

Dr. G. B. LORING,

*Commissioner of Hospitals.*

## E.

*United States marine hospital at Key West, 1849—its condition, efficiency, &c.—prepared at the request of Dr. Edwards.*

When the United States marine hospital was first opened at Key West, the number of patients was greatly above the number for the same months at present, and the weekly expense per patient then was \$2 67½. The past two years have proved unusually healthy, and the number of admissions to the hospital is decreasing.

A physician, steward, and matron are attached to the establishment, whose salaries are as low as efficient services can be obtained in their several departments. The former receives \$1,000 per annum, and the two latter an aggregate of \$480 per annum.

The average number admitted to hospital, 124.

Annual average amount of hospital money collected, \$499 12.

Average detention of patients in the hospital, 16 days.

*How admitted to hospital.*—Collector receives the application and personally examines the applicant—requires him to produce an American seaman's protection, or evidence of having sailed under the American flag at least three years consecutively and last preceding his application, and

sends him to the hospital with a direction to the surgeon to examine and admit him, if not incurable, and if his case require it.

Average expense of patients per week, each one \$8 68.

Average annual expenditure per hospital, \$2,469 30.

The present scale of annual expenditure for the maintenance of this establishment is reduced to the lowest minimum compatible with its efficiency. The building is large, three stories high, with wide piazzas, and the steward and matron cannot, without occasionally employing an assistant, keep it in a proper condition; and the expense of such assistance they defray.

The medicines are purchased upon very low terms from wholesale druggists of New York, and the supplies generally are furnished by resident grocers, under contracts renewed annually.

The annual average of hospital money collected at this port (\$499 12) must ever fall far beneath the lowest annual expenditure to keep up the hospital; and I am unable to suggest any change in the process of collecting it, likely to secure a more regular or strict accountability on the part of mariners. Nor can I suggest any method of more equitably adjusting the burden imposed by its collection among mariners.

The only means that I can suggest for increasing the receipts of hospital money generally, are, either to increase the present rate of 20 cents per month, or to collect the present rate of 20 cents per month from foreign seamen, to which of course there are obvious and weighty objections.

S. K. MALLORY.

## F.

*Answers to interrogatories proposed by Hon. T. O. Edwards to John J. Walker, collector of the district of Mobile, in relation to the marine hospital.*

What number of seamen is attached to vessels enrolled at your port?  
An average of 864 men.

How many pay hospital money?

All, when the marine papers of the vessel are renewed.

How many are admitted into the hospital?

All are entitled to admission, and any one of them is admitted on proper application.

What is the average period of their detention?

Averaging in the year ending 31st March, 1849, 14 days.

By what process are they admitted?

On application, written or verbal, by the master of the vessel, at the custom-house, stating the qualifications of him for whom application is made—which are, citizenship, actual employment on the vessel, and, if a foreigner, three consecutive years' payment of hospital money. A ticket of admission is granted, on presentation of which at the hospital, he is taken in.

What is the cost per week of each man?

Averaging the past year about \$5 25 per week.

What amount of hospital dues do you collect annually?

In the year ending 31st March, 1849, there was collected the sum of \$3,413 21.

What are your fees for collection?

A commission of 3 per cent. on the amount.

How is the money you collect disposed of?

Entered among the receipts in the general account of customs.

What is the annual cost of maintaining the hospital at your port?

Year ending 31st March, 1849, there was expended the sum of \$9,935 47.

Do the men pay the money by discount from their wages, or do the owners of boats pay the fund?

Hospital money is paid by masters or owners of vessels, on the annual renewal of licenses for enrolled vessels, or on entry of registered vessels, calculating from clearance of vessel from last port—20 cents per month for each man, which is deducted from the wages of the men.

What is the amount of tonnage enrolled at your port?

Permanent registers	-	-	-	-	456
Temporary	-	-	-	-	7,288
Enrolled steamers	-	-	-	13,240	
Enrolled sailing-vessels	-	-	-	4,190	
				<hr/>	17,430
Licenses under 20 tons	-	-	-	-	715
				<hr/>	
			Tons	-	<hr/> 25,889 <hr/>

Can you suggest a more equitable and effectual mode of raising the hospital fund than the present?

The system of collection, as far as this port is concerned, works very unequally. A large proportion of the trade upon the rivers, and in the bay, is carried on by steamers enrolled at the west, and sailing-vessels from the east, by which hospital money is paid at home, and the expense of our hospital much increased by their sick. Again, a large proportion of the hands of steamers are slaves, who do not pay hospital money. Judging from the experience of this port, a more equitable mode would be to assess hospital money on tonnage, to be collected upon enrolled vessels at renewal of licenses, and on registered vessels at the entry of such vessel—calculating from date of last payment, pro rata; such payment to be shown by custom house certificate.

What is the relative proportion between the hands employed and the tonnage of your sailing-vessels?

About one man to twenty tons.

COLLECTOR'S OFFICE, *Mobile, May 25, 1849.*

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G.

COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,

*New Orleans, May 25, 1849.*

SIR: Your letter of the 17th instant, propounding several interrogatories in relation to the marine hospital, I have had the honor to receive.

I proceed to reply to them, so far as information in my possession enables me.



1. Number of boatmen attached to vessels enrolled at this port?

No record is kept at this office, nor is there any means of ascertaining the number.

2. How many are admitted to hospital?

If this question applies to boatmen attached to enrolled vessels the information cannot be given, as there is no distinction made between men admitted to the hospital from enrolled and registered vessels. The aggregate number of men, of both classes, admitted in the year 1848, was 778.

3. The average period of detention of sick admitted to the hospital?

The average time was, during the last quarter, 25 days. The regulation limiting that time to four months, it appears, has in many instances been disregarded, by which the average is increased.

4. How are they admitted?

Under permit from the collector, obtained by personal application, with production of protection certificate.

6. What is the cost per week for each man?

Under previous arrangements the government allowed the physician 75 cents per diem for each man's expenses. Since then the government hospital at McDonoughville has been opened for the sick. The records of my office show its expenses to have been as follows:

From November 10, 1848, to December 31, 1848, amount paid, with commission, \$2,953 91; same time, men admitted 108; giving a weekly average cost of \$3 75 per man. From January 1, 1849, to March 31, 1849, paid, commission included, \$5,261; same time, men admitted 184; giving a weekly cost of \$2 22 per man.

6. The amount of hospital dues?

The average of the years 1846, 1847, 1848, \$9,363 19 per annum.

7. How is the money disposed of?

It is placed to the credit of the Treasury Department.

8. Do the men pay the money by discount from their wages, or do the owners of the boats pay the funds?

It depends on the agreement entered into between the captains and their crews.

9. What is the amount of tonnage enrolled at this port?

Steamers enrolled 134,840  $\frac{6}{5}$ ; sailing-vessels 14,092  $\frac{7}{5}$ .

10. Can a more equitable and effectual mode of raising the hospital money than the present be suggested?

If the existing regulation be faithfully observed and complied with, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to devise a more equitable manner of collecting the hospital dues.

11. What is the relative proportion between the hands employed and the tonnage of your sailing-vessels?

Foreign sailing-vessels 51,391  $\frac{5}{5}$ ; men 2,057; coastwise sailing-vessels 14,092  $\frac{7}{5}$ ; men 504.

I have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

SAML. J. PETERS,

*Collector.*

Hon. TOM. O. EDWARDS.

## H.

CUSTOM HOUSE, SURVEYOR'S OFFICE,  
Port of Louisville, May 6, 1849.

*The response of N. P. Porter to the interrogatories propounded to him by Hon. T. O. Edwards, commissioner, in relation to marine hospitals and the marine hospital fund, &c.*

To the 1st interrogatory respondent states: There are about 1,250 seamen who pay hospital dues. I have no data by which to ascertain the number of slaves employed. They do not enter the hospital, and do not pay hospital money. This estimate is made from returns of the entire year 1848.

To the 2d interrogatory he answers, the whole number, 1,250, reported above.

To the 3d interrogatory he answers, during the year 1848 there were admitted about 165 men into the marine hospital at this port.

To the 4th interrogatory he answers, the detention is about 30 days each.

To the 5th interrogatory he answers, through a committee appointed by the City Council of the city of Louisville.

To the 6th interrogatory he answers, \$1 75 per week.

To the 7th interrogatory he answers: In the year 1848 I collected \$1,309 20; previous to that year the average was about \$1,000 per annum.

To the 8th interrogatory he answers: Not one cent for *collection*; but, as agent for adjusting the accounts with the marine hospital, I have been allowed *one* per cent. This year (under my construction of late laws in relation to collections) I have charged *three* per cent. for collections, but my accounts have not yet been adjusted at this department, and I do not know that it is allowed.

To the 9th interrogatory he answers: Each quarter of the year I pay to the marine hospital \$125, under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury—in all \$500 per annum. The balance is paid into the treasury of the United States.

To the 10th interrogatory he answers: As to the original contract I know nothing. The contract was made by and between the Hon. Secretary Woodbury and the city authorities of Louisville before I came into office, and I was directed to pay over to the hospital the sum of \$125 each quarter, as above; and they have receipted each quarter in full for keeping the sick seamen.

To the 11th interrogatory he answers: The master of each boat pays the hospital dues, upon *his own* return, *under oath*, of the number of free seamen employed on his boat, which I understand is *not* deducted out of the seamen's wages, though not in every case.

To the 12th interrogatory he answers: The tonnage enrolled at this port, as belonging to this port, amounted in the year 1848 to 12,709  $\frac{1}{2}$  tons.

To the 13th interrogatory he answers, that if any change in the mode of raising the hospital fund be advisable, he would suggest that steamboats on the western waters pay upon their tonnage the following rates: under 150 tons burden, 12 cents per ton per annum; 150 to 350 tons burden, 10 cents per ton per annum; and over 350 tons, 8 cents per ton

per annum; and the owners of vessels still be allowed to collect the amount from the officers and men to reimburse the *owners* for the hospital money so proposed to be advanced upon the tonnage for the hospital fund.

In addition to the above, your respondent would respectfully suggest one fact in relation to vessels belonging to this district, which merits consideration. There are more slaves employed in the service here than at either Pittsburg Cincinnati or St. Louis, and consequently less hospital money paid *here*. For instance, the steamer Peytona, of 548 tons burden, carries a crew of 55 men, and returns only 17 seamen to pay hospital money. The residue, 38 in number, are slaves, who are not admitted into the hospitals and do not pay. Many others of our boats carry similar crews, and all of them carry more or less slaves.

The Pittsburg and Cincinnati boats, I believe, invariably carry all *free men* in their crews.

If there could be *wards* in the hospitals for *slaves*, and they could be admitted upon the same terms as white seamen, their masters and owners could not, and I think would not, object to the payment of 20 cents per month out of their wages, which would increase the hospital fund very materially in the *West* and *South*, and at the same time add to the expenses of the hospitals very little.

The tax upon tonnage of vessels would create a good deal of complaint and opposition to the scheme, and prevent many persons from entering into the hazardous business on the western waters, and finally be an injury to the commerce of the West and South. [*This the commission cannot believe.*]

I am informed that at St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Pittsburg, the sick seamen are sent to the private hospitals of the "Sisters of Charity," where the charges are \$2 50 to \$3 per week, which swallows up the hospital fund unnecessarily, as would not be the case if the government had hospitals of her own. The charges at the marine hospital in this place being but \$1 75 per week, including medical aid, nursing, clothing, and board, as ascertained by the strict accountability of its officers in their accounts rendered to the city authorities, it will appear evident that nearly fifty per cent. more is paid at those ports than here, which exhausts the moneys collected at those ports, whereas I generally return one-half or more of the amount collected here to the general hospital fund. When I came into office I was informed by the Hon. Secretary Woodbury that only \$500 could be allowed per annum to each of the ports of Pittsburg, Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis and Natchez—that the general fund would not admit of any more being allowed—which instructions I have obeyed; while in every other of the above mentioned ports the entire amount of collections has been exhausted upon their sick seamen, which is done by admitting many who are really not entitled to the privileges of the marine hospital, but with the view of having all the money collected in those districts expended in the district and for the benefit of those private institutions.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

N. P. PORTER, *Surveyor*.

HON. T. O. EDWARDS,

*Commissioner of Hospital Fund.*



## I.

OFFICE OF SURVEYOR OF CUSTOMS,  
*Pittsburg, April 25, 1849.*

SIR: Agreeably to your request, I herewith submit a statement of the number of steamboats owned in this district, the average and aggregate number of hands employed, and the amount of marine hospital money collected and disbursed, from July 12, 1845, to March 31, 1849.

When you were here, I believe I mentioned to you the fact that there were difficulties attending the enrolling and licensing of steam and other boats engaged in the carrying-trade on the western rivers, which, to some extent, affected injuriously the collection of marine hospital money at this port. These difficulties arise, in a great measure, out of the inapplicability of the "enrolling and licensing" act of 1793 to steam and other boats navigating the western rivers.

There are three distinct classes of boats engaged in the transportation of merchandise, produce, &c., &c., to and from this port, viz :

Steamboats, keel-boats, and flat-boats or scows. The first of these classes are generally enrolled and licensed—the others, although employing a large number of hands, and doing a considerable portion of the descending carrying trade, seldom submit to be enrolled and licensed, or licensed. Many of these boats, particularly flats or scows, are unfit to ascend the rivers—they are only constructed for temporary use. Consequently, when they reach their point of destination below, they are generally broken up and destroyed. Others are used for trading purposes, coasting along the shores of the rivers from Pittsburg to New Orleans, selling and bartering their stocks of goods, wares, &c., for money or produce.

Keel boats, and flat-boats, or scows, are not propelled by either steam-power (except when "towed" by steamboats, which is frequently the case with the former) or sails. They are not described in the enrolling and licensing acts of Congress, and it is doubtful whether they are properly subject to them.

The main object of the enrolling and licensing laws seems to have been to protect the revenue and prevent smuggling.

There is little danger of smuggling being carried to any extent on the western rivers. But if Congress deems it necessary that all vessels or boats, whether propelled by steam, sail, or other power, engaged in the internal carrying-trade, should be enrolled and licensed, or licensed, as the case may be, then the laws should be amended, so as to include specifically this description of western boats.

Amendments might be made to the present enrolling and licensing laws, that would secure more correct statistical information in regard to the commerce of the western rivers, and no doubt greatly augment the receipts of the marine hospital fund.

Congress have made large appropriations for the erection of marine hospitals in the west. The support and maintenance of these hospitals will require large annual appropriations, unless measures are adopted for securing a more general collection of hospital dues from persons employed in navigating the rivers, for whose relief these hospitals are building.

You will perceive, by a reference to the annual statement, that the amount of marine hospital money collected at this port in the year ending

December 31, 1848, exceeded that of 1847 nearly one-third ; and that of 1846 is nearly doubled. I have not the means of carrying the comparison beyond July 12, 1845, the day I entered upon the duties of the office. If desirable, no doubt the previous annual collections can be obtained at the Comptroller's office, Washington city.

The United States marine hospital at this place will be completed during the coming fall and winter. Nearly all the work and materials are now commenced, and the contractors have already commenced, and will vigorously prosecute the work to completion.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. B. GUTHRIE,

*Surveyor of Customs.*

GEO. B. LORING, M. D., *Boston.*

Number of steamboats belonging to this port (Pittsburg) 100 ; average number of hands to each boat, 18. Total number of hands, 1,800.

*Amount of hospital money collected and disbursed.*

	Collected.	Disbursed.
1845, from July 12th to December 31st.....	\$515 13	\$268 94
1846, from January 1st to December 31st....	1,095 12	537 90
1847, from January 1st to December 31st....	1,638 22	365 61
1848, from January 1st to December 31st....	2,105 55	642 50
1849, from January 1st to March 31st.....	603 92	133 70
	5,957 94	1,948 65

K.

CUSTOM HOUSE, NEW YORK,  
*Collector's Office, September 5, 1849.*

SIR: I have the pleasure to state the result of my inquiries into the subject proposed in your letter of the 30th ultimo.

1. What provision is made for sick and disabled seamen in New York?

The United States pay to the New York hospital \$3 per week for keeping one hundred sick seamen, and allow \$5 for each burial ; all the excess above one hundred is provided for in the State Hospital, "Seaman's Fund and Retreat," where the average number accommodated for many years past has been about 180.

2. Whether you are able to accommodate all who apply?

We have not known any instance in which a sick or disabled seaman has been refused admission into both the hospitals already mentioned.

3. Whether the fund is restricted?

I do not understand what is meant by this question, unless it refers to the limitation kept by the government of the number (100) provided for in the City Hospital.

4. Whether you keep the tax of 20 cents per month distinct from the tax laid for the "Snug Harbor?"

No other collection of hospital money of any kind, or from any source, is made at the custom-house, than the 20 cents per month. Formerly the collector's cashier acted as agent for the Seaman's Retreat, under State laws, but the practice has been discontinued.

5. How many men enter your port, paying hospital money?

A quarterly return is made to the Treasury Department, expressing the number of registered and licensed seamen who contribute to the quarterly collection. For instance, quarter ending 30th June, 1849—

Seamen in registered vessels 10,604, paying \$6,130;

Seamen in licensed vessels 1,599, paying \$2,781.

This current quarter will probably show an excess over this statement, and the two succeeding quarters will probably fall short. If you need precision of detail, name the period for which you would have quotation of these quarterly returns, and they will be furnished immediately.

6. What system would you recommend for the increase of the hospital fund?

If the same tax were laid upon seamen employed in whaling and the fisheries as on ordinary seamen, there would be a large increase. [The commission would state here that the number of fishermen is estimated at 10,000, which is included in the 175,000 seamen calculated upon in the report.] These pay no tax, and of course are not entitled to relief; yet they are uniformly received into the hospitals, when a plausible case of distress is stated. Another change is suggested, by the obvious justice of the claim: The naval hospital should receive sick men discharged from the United States service at any time, whether two or three years after their discharge. When the crew of a ship-of-war is paid off, riot and intemperance follow, and about a quarter of the men are found in the local hospitals as soon as their money is spent. Common humanity forbids their being rejected, though they may never have been contributing one cent to the fund.

My official position gives me no further knowledge of this subject than is derived from the quarterly returns referred to; and I fear that some of these answers may appear crude. If anything that I have offered needs explanation, it will be cheerfully given.

Most respectfully, your obedient servant,

Dr. GEO. B. LORING,  
*Chelsea Hospital, near Boston.*

J. S. HONE,  
*Assistant Collector.*

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L.

1st. Sick seamen are provided with medicine, medical attendance, boarding, in short with all the requisites of support, in the Pennsylvania hospital.

2d. The cost of each man per week is \$3. Funerals, clothing for the



destitute, and some other incidental expenses, make a trifling addition to the cost in a year.

3d. The seamen themselves, both officers and foremast men, would be highly gratified with the erection of a hospital, but I do not know that its advantages would counterbalance its cost.

4th. I do not think any method of raising funds would be so free from objection as the present mode. The seamen are accustomed to it; it is certain in its operation; it preserves the man's independence, and affords him a certainty of support in time of distress without degrading him to the level of a pauper.

Respectfully submitted:

CUSTOM HOUSE,  
Philadelphia, September 20, 1849.

ISAAC S. BONSAALL,

*Clerk of the Marine Hospital.*

M.

DISTRICT AND PORT OF BALTIMORE,  
*Surveyor's Office, August 27, 1849.*

SIR: Your respects of the 24th instant, to the collector of this port, has just been received and handed to me. In answer to your inquiries in reference to the marine hospital and hospital fund in this district, for sick and disabled seamen, I beg leave to state that the applications are to the admissions in the ratio of 5 to 4; which is caused by the limited appropriation of the Secretary of the Treasury, viz: \$5,000 to meet all the expenditures.

There are two excellent hospitals in our city, both of which have wards for the accommodation of seamen. The Baltimore infirmary and the Baltimore city and marine hospital are both used for the purposes referred to. The charge of either is \$3 per week, including medical attendance, board, &c. In consequence of the limited amount of the fund appropriated, I am compelled to restrict the number to thirty persons, not permitting more than that number at any one time. The sum appropriated is entirely inadequate to meet the expenses which would accrue from the admission of all who apply; consequently I have frequently to refuse them.

The amount received at this port from seamen's wages is comparatively small, not averaging over \$3,000 per annum.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ELIAS T. GRIFFIN,

*Director of Marine Hospital.*

Dr. GEO. B. LORING,  
*Chelsea, Mass.*

N.

COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,  
*New Haven, September 1, 1849.*

SIR: In reply to your letter of the 24th ultimo, making inquiries respecting the provisions at this port for the relief of sick and disabled seamen, I would state:

1st. That all seamen of the above description are taken care of by the General Hospital Society of Connecticut, located at this place, with which a contract for that purpose has been made annually for several years.

2d. The expense per week of each seaman is \$3. The daily average is six persons

4th. I do not think that a marine hospital is desirable at this port, as the sick are attended to as cheaply, and better than they could be attended to in any other way.

5th. I am not prepared to say that any more equitable and systematic method of raising the funds could be adopted, than the one now in operation.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES DONAGHE,  
*Collector.*

Dr. GEO. B. LORING,  
*Chelsea, Mass.*

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O.

CUSTOM HOUSE, COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,  
*Savannah, May 29, 1849.*

SIR: I received your letter of the 25th instant, and in answer to your interrogatories in relation to drugs and medicines, I reply that there were none imported into this port during the past year, nor have any been imported since my appointment as collector. The act of the 26th June last, so far as I can learn, appears to be received with general approbation as affording our citizens a protection against the frauds practised upon them in the importation of adulterated drugs.

In answer to your interrogatories in relation to the disposing of our sick and disabled seamen, I reply that they are provided for by contract in the Savannah poor-house and hospital. The recipients of the hospital fund average about 160. The amount collected annually is about \$500 or \$600. The relative proportion of hands employed on board of vessels belonging to this port paying hospital money is small, compared with the amounts received. Our receipts are mainly derived from the arrival of American vessels from foreign ports, and registered vessels arriving coast-wise; and upon every surrender and renewal of enrolments and licenses, whether owing to change of owners or expiration of licenses, the masters or owners of the vessels pay the hospital dues, deducting the same from the seamen when settling with them. This mode has hitherto worked very well, and I cannot say that I can suggest any more practical or equitable mode of collecting the same.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. B. BULLOCH,  
*Collector.*

Hon. TOM. O. EDWARDS,  
*Commissioner, &c.*

P.

WASHINGTON, June 19, 1849.

DEAR SIR: In compliance with the request contained in your letter of the 12th instant, I will now endeavor to answer the questions therein stated, and in the order in which they are presented.

The hospital at New Orleans cost, including site	-	-	\$110,081
Do Mobile	"	"	40,000
Do Key West	"	"	25,000
Do Charleston	"	"	28,000
Do Ocracoke	"	"	about 8,500
Do Chelsea, near Boston, cost	-	-	27,603

The cost of the structure at Norfolk cannot be readily ascertained.

It is estimated that those authorized to be built at Chicago, Pittsburg, Louisville, Paducah, St. Louis, and Natchez, will cost \$30,000 each; that at Cleveland, \$25,000. These are all for which appropriations have been made, except that at Napoleon, which has been suspended because of objection to the site.

Reference is made to printed documents of last or previous session, and to the manuscript statement herewith transmitted, for expense at each of the hospitals.

Special arrangements\* are made with local institutions at New Haven, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and St. Louis, under which seamen are provided for at \$3 per week. With a few exceptions where greater or less rates are paid, the circular regulations of 1841 apply.

The comparative cost of our public hospital maintenance with these rates may be computed from the data given in the manuscript statement herewith enclosed.

I am, very respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,  
J. McGINNIS.

Dr. T. O. EDWARDS,  
Lancaster, Ohio.

Copy of the manuscript referred to in the above communication:

*Statement of the number of patients relieved, the number of days during which relief was afforded, at the marine hospitals at Boston, Norfolk, Mobile and Key West, during the year ending the 30th June, 1848.*

Marine hospitals.	No. of patients.	No. relieved.	Days of relief.	Aggregate charge.
Boston - -	884	1,146	23,602	\$14,037 73
Norfolk - -	130	153	2,668	2,291 52
Mobile - -	587	688	9,425	9,282 67
Key West - -	92	113	1,934	4,313 23

ALLEN A. HALL,  
Register.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Register's Office, June 16, 1849.



Q.

SURGEON GENERAL'S OFFICE, *September 3, 1849.*

SIR: Your communication of the 24th ultimo, asking for information relative to "the situation of hospital affairs at St. Louis," and "the names of the commissioners," has been received.

In reply I have to inform you that a board of medical officers, consisting of surgeons W. V. Wheaton, S. G. P. De Camp, and A. N. McLaren, convened at St. Louis on the 1st of May last, for the purpose of selecting a site for a marine hospital at that place. The board, however, found that the appropriation for the purchase of a suitable quantity of land was wholly inadequate; and they were therefore unable to effect a purchase. The board, however, recommended a lot belonging to the United States, near the arsenal, upon which the powder magazine stands, and which it is contemplated to remove, in consequence of the extension of the city in that vicinity.

It is not yet known that there has yet been any definite action upon the selection made by the board.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

By order:

H. L. HEISKELL,

*Surgeon United States Army.*

GEO. B. LORING, M. D.,

*Surgeon U. S. Marine Hospital, Chelsea, Mass.*

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R.

BUREAU OF TOPOGRAPHICAL CORPS,

*Washington, September 19, 1849.*

SIR: In answer to your letter of the 14th, I regret that it is not in my power to give all the information you desire, about the marine hospital at Chicago. From the want of time, and the want of force in the office, I was obliged to send the original drawings to Chicago; with directions, however, to return them as soon as copies could be made. They have not yet been returned.

From last accounts, all of the excavation had been made, and the foundation walls commenced. It is hardly probable that more will be done this season than to raise the foundation to the first floor, and to lay in a stock of materials for the future progress of the work.

Respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

J. J. ABERT,

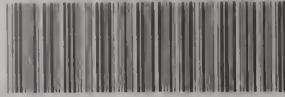
*Col. Corps Topographical Engineers.*

Dr. G. B. LORING, M. D.,

*U. S. Marine Hospital, Chelsea, Mass.*



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